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THE

THEORY OF DREAMS:

IN WHICH

AN INQUIRY

IS MADE INTO

THE POWERS AND FACULTIES

OF THE

HUMAN MIND,

AS THEY ARE ILLUSTRATED IN THE

MOST REMARKABLE DREAMS

RECORDED IN

SACRED AND PROFANE HISTORY.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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PREFACE.

You, while you are awake, sleep; and as you sleep, dream.

Tu vigilans dormis, &c. *Hieron. Epist.*

THE Author of the following little Work begs leave to enter his caveat against all sarcastic strictures on the title of his Book, and requests that he may not be accused, as was Vigilantius,

(for the sake of the play upon his name probably,) by St. Jerom, of writing in waking slumbers; because at a time so awful as the present, when every day teems with great events, and the fate of empires, he has employed his thoughts on Dreams; for, in truth, the fearful importance of the scenes which now interest the attention of mankind, as they only harass and afflict the mind, affording it no prospect of speedy relief, lead him to have recourse to speculative inquiries, with a view of receding from gloomy reflections, promising himself, as did Livy, when he projected his History, " the consolation of with-

drawing from the sight of evils which prevail."

That the subject may afford some little entertainment, and even instruction to the reader, is the Author's earnest hope: with this view he has collected, with much industry, whatever might throw light upon it, even to the admission of more accounts than have any strict claim to regard, that he may not appear to have neglected any dreams to which importance has been attached; and he has endeavoured to enliven the remarks which he has produced by the most apposite instances which could illustrate the theme, and

often by poetical quotations, wishing to erect an altar, like that mentioned by Pausanias, on which sacred rites were performed, at the same time, to the Muses and to Sleep.

ERRATA.

VOL. I.

Page 12, line 2, for *by* read *for*
— 12, — 5, for *here* read *there*
— 15, — 1 and 2 from bottom, for *farther continued* read *experienced*
— 20, — 3, after *occasion* add *bidding him to express his anger to the senate*
— 23, — 18, dele *that*
— 45, — 2 from bottom, for *and* read *who*
— 149, — 7, for *preaching* read *practising*
— 152, for *Dinasbrune* read *Dinasbrane*
— 161, — 8, for *Sfertia* read *Sfortia*

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THE

THEORY

OF

DREAMS, &c.

CHAPTER I.

ON DREAMS AND THEIR DISTINCTIONS.

When to soft sleep the members are resigned,
And without sense the body lies reclined;
Inward some living spirit still displays
Its active energies a thousand ways;
Feels Joy's quick impulse, its emotions strong,
And all the cares which to the heart belong.

LUCRET. l. 3. v. 113. Præterea, &c.

THERE is perhaps no subject of equal interest which has been so little methodically treated as that of Dreams. In conversation they are frequently the theme of transient remark, and

vague discussion; but there are very few regular dissertations concerning them, though it might be supposed that what so much tends to illustrate the powers and faculties of the human mind, would have engaged attentive consideration.

The reason of this neglect indeed cannot easily be discovered: whether it be, that the wide range which the prospect opens seems to tempt rather desultory and discursive flight, than steady and systematic enquiry, or that the indistinct notions which are usually entertained in hasty speculation, appear to preclude the hope of clear and satisfactory decision, the projector of the present treatise attempts not to determine; but he is of opinion that much curious information may be collected on the subject, and that some important conclusions may be deduced from a general view of the considerations which are connected with it. In the Essay, which the author designs to compose, it will not be expected that he should embrace the whole scope of the argument; it will be

sufficient if he throw out some general principles, and confirm his remarks by a reference to some of those dreams, both ancient and modern, which have excited the chief attention.

In order to assist our examination of that variety of matter which will demand our notice, it may be useful to advert to the distinctions under which the different kinds of dreams have been characterized in general description by preceding writers.

The first distinction laid down by Macrobius, an ancient author, refers to what is properly called a dream *, which he regards as a figurative and mysterious representation that requires to be interpreted. An example of this is furnished by Dion Cassius †, who states that Nero dreamt that he saw the chair of Jove pass into the palace of Vespasian, which was considered as emblematical of the translation of the empire to Nero.

* Ὄνειρος, somnium. † L. lxvi.

The second relates to what is termed vision *, which was understood to obtain, when any one saw that which afterwards came to pass in the same manner that it was foreseen. A friend, for instance, acting in the same circumstances, as in reality the next morning he may be found to do.

The third sort is what the ancients conceived to be oracular †, and what they described as taking place, when in sleep a parent or priest, or venerable person or deity, denounced what was or was not to happen, or what should be done or avoided; an instance of which is said to have occurred to Vespasian, who, when a private man in Achaia, dreamt that a person unknown assured him, that his prosperity should begin as soon as Nero should lose a tooth: in completion of which he was shewn on the next day a tooth just drawn from the emperor; soon after which Nero's death took place, as likewise that of Galba, and discord

---

* Ὄραμα, visio. † Χρηματισμὸς, oraculum.

broke out between Otho and Vitellius, which facilitated Vespasian's ascent to the throne *.

An impressive example is also furnished by Virgil, who represents the disfigured shade of Hector to have appeared to Æneas on the night on which the Grecians took possession of Troy, exhorting him to escape from the flames of the city already falling to destruction.

These were supposed to rise under the influence of inspiration: Cicero considers them as particularly suited to temples, and we are told, that the leaders of the Lacedemonians were accustomed to lie down in the temple of Pasithea, in expectation of such oracular suggestions, in which they trusted as infallibly true †. They are here produced only by way of illustration.

---

* Sueton. Vespas. Dion. Cass. L. lxvi.

† Cicero de Divin. L. i. §. 43.

The fourth is the Insomnium *, which Macrobius represents as some solicitude of an oppressed mind, body, or fortune, which, as it harassed us when awake, so it affects us in our sleep; as for instance, when a lover finds himself possessed or deprived of the object of his affections; or when any one under apprehensions of some insidious enemy seems to have fallen into his power, or to have escaped from it. With respect to the body, when a person filled with wine, or distended with food, fancies himself either strangled with repletion, or suddenly relieved; or when, on the contrary, a man hungry or thirsty appears to desire, or to seek, or to find, food or liquor: lastly, with respect to fortune, when any one seems, according to his hopes or fears, to be elevated to or degraded from power and high stations.

These dreams were considered by the ancients as especially deceitful and vain †, as

* Ἐνύπνιον. † Ψευδεῖς ὄνειροι, Sophocles.

leaving no significant impression; they are spoken of by Virgil as those

" Fallacious dreams which ghosts to earth transmit *,"

and are directly opposite to the dreams which Persius describes as

" Visions purg'd from phlegm †,"

and which were considered as sent from the gods, and not proceeding from humours of the body.

Petronius Arbiter, or rather Epicurus, thus describes the Insomnium with discrimination from the oracle.

The fleeting spectres which in dreams arise
Come not from temples, or indulgent skies;
The mind creates them, when its powers uncheck'd
May sport, and leave the body in neglect.

---

* Falsa ad cœlum mittunt insomnia manes. Virgil. Æneid. l. vi. The earth is here mentioned as heaven, in relation to the lower regions, in which the dead were supposed to be.

† Sat. ii. v. lvii.

The hero sees disorder'd legions fly,
And helpless monarchs bath'd in slaughter die,
Renews the war, besieged towns assails,
With sword and flames the lofty fortress scales.
In visionary courts the lawyers spar,
And convicts tremble at th' ideal bar.
Still o'er his hidden gold the miser quakes,
The sportsman still with dogs the woodlands shakes:
The skilful mariner the vessel saves,
Or buffets, from the wreck escap'd, the waves.
All that affection breathes by love is penn'd,
And tokens sent which love delights to send.
Ev'n dogs in sleep the same impression bear,
And tongue the scented footsteps of the hare.
The wretched must the wounds of mis'ry feel,
Though night's still influence on the world should steal *.

Macrobius illustrates the Phantasm, which is the fifth sort, and which is styled Visus by Cicero, as that which takes place between waking and sleeping, as it does in the first clouds of sleep, when the person who begins to doze, thinking himself awake, imagines that he sees forms differing in shape and magnitude from natural objects rushing upon him, and wandering about; or any strange confusion of

* Petron. Arbit. p. 178. Somnia quæ mentes, &c.

things, cheerful or distressing. Under this class he places the Ephialtes, or night-mare, which common opinion supposes to invade persons when asleep, and *to load and incommode them* by the weight.

Macrobius represents the Phantasm and the Insomnium as little deserving of attention, conceiving them to furnish no subject of divination or assistance in the discovery of futurity: popular superstition, however, seems to have regarded the night-mare as capable of predicting.

Macrobius, in his description, has not included visions which were supposed to be seen in the day, when the senses were awake, several of which are recorded in the fabulous relations of ancient history, as that of the appearance of Romulus, who is said to have presented himself in glittering armour, and with an aspect more bright and august than when living, to Julius Proculus, a patrician of distinguished character, as he was travelling on the public road, and to have assured him of the future

power and prosperity of Rome *: and another example was furnished in the apparition which appeared to Tarchetius, king of the Albans, and which was feigned to have been the father of Romulus †. Those, indeed, come under the general idea of visions, treated of in the second definition of Macrobius, differing from them only as they occurred in the day; but, properly speaking, they should be distinguished as being imparted to persons whose senses were awake.

A more simple distribution of dreams than that of Macrobius was adopted by those who divided them only into two sorts—plain and allegorical: the former including such as exhibited things in their own form ‡; the latter such as intimated circumstances under similitudes.

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* Plutarch. in Romul. † Ibid.

‡ Θεωρηματικοὶ — things which appeared in their own likeness.

CHAPTER II.

CONCERNING DREAMS RELATED IN PROFANE ACCOUNTS OF ANCIENT HISTORY.

It is certain there is a very great affinity between the passion of superstition, and that of tales. The love of strange narrations, and the ardent appetite towards unnatural objects, has a near alliance with the like appetite towards the supernatural kind, such as are called prodigious and of dire omen.—*Shaftesbury's Advice to an Author, vol. i. p. 235.*

If restricting our present attention to these dreams, which are recorded in profane history, we examine their character and pretension, with reference to the distinction laid down in the preceding chapter, we find ourselves necessarily involved in the question whether we may consider it as a part of God's general moral government to furnish mankind with dreams predictive of future events, or whether we are

to regard prophetic dreams as reserved in the exclusive service of Revelation, by the testimony of its claims, and for the communication of its instruction.

Here is one obvious consideration which should lead us to suppose, that dreams have not been employed by God in the ordinary course of his providence for the conveyance of information concerning future events to mankind, which is, that he has not furnished any general direction to us to confide in them, or any principles for the interpretation of them; and it seems difficult to conceive that he should impart communications of his will without any sanction of authority to command respect, or any ground for explaining what is ambiguous.

The dreams recorded by profane writers, ancient as well as modern, are, as to their general character, so wild and indeterminate, and so seldom capable of any exact and appropriate interpretation, in consistency with

those convictions which we derive from Revelation, that there are few accounts which have the slightest pretensions to be considered as tending to establish the idea of there being any thing prophetic in ordinary dreams, or of their having resulted from divine suggestion; and no relation as to inspiration can be received as having an unquestionable claim to acceptance, excepting those which are furnished in the Scriptures, and which respect dreams connected with the great scheme of Revelation.

It is possible indeed that dreams, though resulting from the ordinary powers of the mind in sleep, may by their impression and effects be rendered subservient to purposes of salutary tendency, may awaken reflection, or lead to the confession of crimes; but the point, which there seems to be ground to dispute, is that of their immediate inspiration, since they do not appear to be divine suggestions; to require implicit confidence, or to justify extraordinary precautions.

There are, it is true, some few dreams mentioned in profane history, which as they seem calculated only to intimate the general superintendance of a Supreme Being, and the general vigilance of his government, approving distinguished virtues, and abhorring flagitious crimes, do not contradict any declared maxims of Divine Wisdom; and which have been therefore thought to have some pretensions to be ranked among those general notices of himself, which God might vouchsafe to the heathen world, and have contributed to confirm the opinions of those persons who regard dreams as divine communications constituting a part of God's universal and permanent government.

One of this description was much celebrated among the Stoics. Simonides, of whom other wonderful stories are related, having, we are told, performed the friendly office of sepulture to a dead body which he had found on a coast to which he had sailed, was admonished in a dream by the object of his pious care, not to

depart the next day, in deference to which admonition he remained on shore, while those who sailed were wrecked in his sight. The poet, it is said, in grateful remembrance of his escape, afterwards composed a poem as a lasting monument of praise to his benefactor*.

The other which is related by Cicero served a purpose equally worthy of the interference of a superior power. It represents two Arcadian friends travelling together to have arrived at Megara, one of whom took up his abode at an inn, the other at a friend's house. The latter in his first sleep appeared to behold his friend entreating assistance against his host, who was preparing to murder him; in his alarm he startled up, but on reflection thinking that the dream did not merit attention, he composed himself, till his friend again appeared, requiring, that since he had not farther continued any succour while living, his death

* Valerius Maxim. L. i. C. 7. de Somniis. See also De Miraculis, L. i. C. 8.

might not remain unrevenged; informing his fellow traveller, that he had been murdered, and that his body had been thrown into a cart and covered with dung, and directing him to go in the morning to the gate of the city. On obeying the instruction, the friend met a carter, who, when interrogated, fled in terror; the body was discovered in a cart, and the innkeeper brought to justice *.

Both of these dreams had certainly a beneficial and sufficient purpose to answer, and if we could consider inspired dreams as constituting a part of the general system of God's moral government, they might be received as of divine suggestion.

But there are so few of this character, that they will not authorize any general conclusion of inspiration, and indeed they may be accounted for on other grounds. The former of

* Cicero De Divin. L. ii. §. 68. Diod. Sic. L. xvii. P. 575.

the dreams here mentioned might have been accidental. It was not miraculous that Simonides, exulting in the performance of an office of consideration, to which great merit was attached in ancient times, should in his sleep contemplate the person whom he had buried solicitous for his safety; and on the eve of departure on a perilous voyage, fancy that he admonished him not to sail in a vessel which eventually was wrecked.

The latter appears to have been too precise for any casual coincidence between the dream and the event, but the authority on which it is related does not preclude scepticism; there is among men a disposition to marvellous tales; what fiction will invent, credulity will receive, and exaggeration magnify; the story was, perhaps, at first fabricated, and then copied from writer to writer; no period or names are assigned to the relation. It seems not to have produced any conviction on Cicero, who records it among other accounts, as casual.

If we are indisposed to receive these, there are some which, upon stronger grounds, may be rejected, since they imply a revelation without sufficient object, or have a pernicious tendency; and it must be inconsistent with the divine attributes to have conveyed intimations of futurity to those who had no ground to respect them, and could derive no instruction from them, and still more unreasonable is it to suppose God to have imparted any that were calculated to confirm fallacious systems of religion, or to subvert the eternal laws of moral wisdom.

Upon these considerations we need not hesitate to reject those accounts which are connected with the superstitions of antiquity, and calculated to strengthen a belief in the existence of the heathen deities; such may be considered as crafty inventions devised for some purpose of interest or policy.

When the temple dedicated to Jupiter Tonans by Augustus, of which the beautiful

columns are still to be seen near the Capitol at Rome, became so much frequented as to draw off the votaries of Jupiter Capitolinus, Augustus superstitiously dreamt, (or in artful compliance with the suggestions of interested priests, pretended to dream), that Jupiter Capitolinus expostulated with him, in resentment for being degraded into a second rank by the neglect which he suffered, and received for answer from the emperor, that he had placed Jupiter Tonans as a sentinel to Jupiter Capitolinus; and, in consequence, on the next day a bell, such as sentinels use in cases of alarm, was hung up in the temple of Capitoline Jove *.

Another instance which respected the public religion of the country, is related by Valerius Maximus, Livy, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, and others †, who inform us, that Jupiter being

* Dion. Cass. L. liv.

† Valerius Maxim. L. i. C. 7. de Somniis. Plutarch. in C. Marc. Coriolan. Livy. L. ii. §. 36.

offended by the punishment of a slave in the forum, in sight of a public procession, signified to Titus Atinius his displeasure on the occasion. On the dream being slighted, the son of Atinius was struck with death, and he himself afterwards deprived of the use of his limbs, for neglecting the divine command; till, at length, being roused to obedience, he was carried on a couch to the senate, and after the delivery of his message, perceived a recovery of his strength, and, to the surprise of all present, walked home without any assistance.

Sergius Galba having prepared a rich diamond necklace to adorn the statue of Fortune at Tusculum, and afterwards, on changing his mind, presented it to the Capitoline Venus, was visited in the succeeding night by the image of Fortune, threatening him, that as she had been defrauded of the destined present, so she should soon take away what she had conferred upon him; soon after which, says the story, Galba died *.

* Fulgorius.

Upon these and similar relations we have to observe, that as it is not probable that God would suffer the reverence of mankind to be excited in favour of the fictitious deities of the heathen world, by any miraculous suffrage to the opinion of their existence, we must be inclined to consider these dreams as having merely a casual reference to historical circumstances; or perhaps as fictitious inventions intended to raise surprise, or respect, for the worship and ceremonies of pagan superstition.

Upon similar considerations, we should be inclined to discredit the relation which is given of the repeated appearances of Hercules to Sophocles, to point out the person who had stolen a golden patera from his temple; on the conviction of whom the temple was said to have been dedicated to Hercules, the discoverer *.

* Heywood's Hier. L. iv. p. 224.

Even those persons who assent to the inspiration of dreams which had a beneficial tendency, must reject such as contradict the sure principles of religion, and involve consequences inconsistent with the declared doctrines of Scripture, since certainly to represent the power of inspiration to have contributed to advance the gloom, and strengthen the fetters of superstition, must be deemed injurious to the attributes of that Being, whose jealous wisdom is understood to delight in the progress of truth, and who seems to have challenged the works and energies of preternatural power and knowledge, in exclusive support of the evidence and claims of true religion.

It may be said, perhaps, that we are authorized by sacred instruction to maintain, that the Almighty has often judged it right to display his resentment against gross and flagrant wickedness, by suffering its followers to be infatuated in the delusions of their own vanity, and hardened in the obstinacy of their wilful

error; subjecting them sometimes not only to the arts and wicked contrivances of interested men, but also to the imposing miracles and malignant deceptions of superior beings; and that as the wonders which God permitted the magicians of Egypt to perform contributed to aggravate the perverseness of Pharaoh, so dreams and oracles might, as Justin Martyr * supposed, be purposely suffered, at the suggestion of evil spirits, to mislead those who, disregarding the simple evidence of a stupendous and well-regulated creation, which never ceased to bear testimony to the government of an intelligent and benevolent God, plunged themselves into the depths of a profligate and licentious idolatry.

Whatever force we may allow to this argument, we cannot suppose, that when God was not particularly offended, and when the dreams which were furnished actually afforded deliver-

* Apol. C. i.

ance, that they were designed to be instrumental to the punishment of general error. It is an arrangement undoubtedly consistent with general and equitable laws, that the punishment of sins should result from the indulgence of evil, as Saul, when he wished to break through the appointed and acknowledged decrees of God, by having recourse to those necromantic arts which he himself had discountenanced as superstitious, heard his fatal sentence uttered with unerring truth; and as Ahab was justly seduced by an evil spirit, when he refused to listen to any prophet who predicted not "smooth things" unto him; still however it is utterly improbable, that communications of divine mercy should have been designed to be merely subservient to the establishment of error. If the dream, which was said to have been imparted to Stilpo, had any foundation in truth, it should seem to have been designed to check the spirit of offering up expensive oblations to the heathen deities. The account represents him to have dreamt, that he saw

Neptune expostulating with him for not having immolated an ox to him, as was the custom of the priests. Upon which he remonstrated with the deity, for coming like a child, to complain to him, that he had not filled the city with the smoke of an expensive sacrifice, when he had done what his circumstances would admit: upon which the god extended his hand to him with a smile in proof of approbation, and promised that, on his account, he would afford a plentiful supply of water to the Megarensians *.

Upon the whole then, however unwilling to weaken any impressions which may be conceived to have even an indirect tendency to promote moral purposes, the author conceives, that there is little or nothing to be collected from the history of heathen antiquity, which can be allowed to establish the supposition of dreams being prophetic; and perhaps

* Plutarch. Vol. i.

indeed it will be judged, on reflection, that any advantage which might occasionally result from a belief of the interference of the Supreme Being in the suggestion of dreams, would be more than counterbalanced by the erroneous apprehensions and superstitious fears which such a persuasion would engender.

CHAPTER III.

CONCERNING OTHER DREAMS RELATED IN PROFANE ACCOUNTS OF ANCIENT HISTORY.

Nor call a god upon the stage to stand,
Unless the cause require a godlike hand.
Nec deus intersit.—*Horace, De Art. Poet.*

It deserves to be remarked, as an objection to many of the dreams mentioned in ancient accounts, which lay claim to the reputation of having been inspired, that they are represented to have predicted events which it was of no advantage to reveal, and of which no care could avoid the accomplishment.

The dreams recorded in Scripture were calculated especially to establish the evidence, and conspire with the designs of religion; they un-

folded the scenes of futurity for the consolation and encouragement of faith, for the attestation to character, and for the manifestation of God's councils. The threats and the promises, which they disclosed, were for adequate purposes, and sometimes suspended on conditions and revocable decrees, they were given with the evidence and clear manifestation of truth, were attested by signs, and explained to those who had reason to look to their completion, and to hope or to tremble without the imputation of credulity.

But the dreams, mentioned by heathen writers, were delivered to persons who had often no especial claim to divine attention, and who had no reason to respect them till some correspondent event awakened regard.

If Alcibiades dreamt that he was clad in the robe of his mistress, which a few days after was affectionately wrapped round his unburied and neglected body; or if, as other writers represent, he dreamt that he was beheaded by

Magæus, we cannot perceive that any useful warning was designed. So if when Polycrates, the tyrant of Samos, departed from that island, in order to repair to Oretes (the governor of Sardis under Cyrus) his daughter dreamed that she saw her father lifted up in the air, whilst Jupiter washed, and the Sun anointed him, we know not what good purpose was to be served, even though some Œdipus should have explained to him, that the dream predicted that he should be hanged by Oretes; and that his body remaining, should be washed by the rain, and the fat be melted by the sun *.

The dream proclaimed the parent was deceived
By secret omens, nor his fate perceived †.

The inutility of such intimations may be farther illustrated by other relations: when Crœsus dreamed that his accomplished son Atys was transfixed by a javelin headed by

* Herod. L. iii. Camerar. Oper. Subsec. Cent. 2. C. 57.
† Claudian. L. ii.

iron, he did all that parental solicitude could suggest, in removing him from the command of the Lydian forces, and in giving him a wife whose affection might conspire, in all precautions, to secure him from injury; and when the prince was accidentally killed by the javelin of a faithful attendant at the hunting of a boar, we perceive that the fatal prediction of the dream could be calculated only to disturb the mind of Crœsus, and to aggravate the affliction which drove the unhappy Adrastus to suicide *. While

"The wretched mortal did not 'scape the blow †."

Nay, sometimes attention to dreams seems to have been the cause of crimes and misfortunes, if we receive the accounts which are given to us; thus Paris is said to have eloped with Helen under the encouragement of a dream, in which Venus promised him her assistance.

---

* Herod. L. i.

† Sophocles—Consult Tertull. Lib. de Anim. C. 46. Plin. L. xxv. C. 3.

Astyages, sovereign of the Medes, having dreamed that a vine springing from his daughter overspread all Asia, the soothsayers led him to apprehend that her offspring would deprive him of his dominions. In order to prevent this, he gave her in marriage to Cambyses, an obscure Persian, and delivered her son Cyrus to a confidential servant to be slain; but the direction not being observed, the child lived to overcome Astyages, and to translate the kingdom from the Medes to the Persians *.

Cambyses, when in Egypt, fancied in his sleep that he saw a messenger arrive from Persia, who reported to him that Smerdis, who had excited his jealousy, being seated on the royal throne, had touched the heavens with his head; on which he sent one of his confidential servants to put him to death; which being effected, gave occasion to the setting up of a

* Herod. L. i.

more formidable rival in a fictitious Smerdis, and eventually caused the death of Cambyses *.

Hamilcar, when he besieged Syracuse, is reported to have dreamed that he should sup the next night in the town. Encouraged by the vision he attempted the assault; but a mutiny having arisen in his army, the townsmen made a sally and took him prisoner.

Justus, a patrician Roman in the reign of Constantius, dreamed that the purple issued from his loins: the report of the dream, it is said, excited the jealousy of Constantine, and provoked the emperor to put him to death; but his only daughter, Justina, a beautiful and modest girl, being seen in the bath by Severa Augusta, and made her attendant; and being commended to Valentinian, so engaged his affections, that he obtained a law to marry her,

* Herod. L. iii.

and made her a joint partner of the empire with his empress.

Naronianus is related to have dreamed that he was made consul, and that his son became emperor. Upon the death of Julian, the son ascended the imperial throne; but Naronianus dying, a son of the new emperor, whose name also was Naronianus, was elected consul, and the dreamer appeared to have been amused with a delusive ambiguity *.

* Fulgosius.

more formidable rival in a fictitious Smerdis, and eventually caused the death of Cambyses[a].

Hannibal, when he besieged Syracuse, is reported to have dreamed that he should sup the next night in the town. Encouraged by this omen he attempted the assault; but a multitude having arisen in his army, the townsmen made a sally and took him prisoner.

Justus, a patrician Roman in the reign of Constantius, dreamed that the purple issued from his loins: the report of the dream, it is said, excited the jealousy of Constantine, and provoked the emperor to put him to death; but his only daughter, Justina, a beautiful and modest girl, being seen in the bath by Severa Augusta, was made her attendant; and being recommended to Valentinian, so engaged his affections, that he obtained a law to marry her,

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* Fulgosius.

CHAPTER IV.

FARTHER REMARKS ON DREAMS MENTIONED IN ANCIENT HISTORY.

Barbarians never taste the hallow'd streams
Of Prophecy, nor are inspir'd by dreams.
Claudian. in Ruf. L. ii. Pref. Nullus Castalios. &c.

It may perhaps be imagined, that some authority should be ascribed to those dreams which are recorded as having had a beneficial tendency, and as having proved conducive to the preservation and comfort of nations and illustrious persons.

Herodotus mentions, that when Sennacherib invaded Egypt with a strong army, and the soldiers, who had been injuriously treated by Sethon, refused to assist in the defence of the country, the priest repaired to the temple of

his god, and falling amidst his lamentations into sleep, dreamed that the deity appeared to him, and encouraged him with the assurance, that if he marched against the troops of the Assyrians, he should suffer no injury, for that God would send him assistance. Encouraged by the vision he marched with his followers, among whom were no soldiers, to Pelusium, where vast numbers of mice in the night invaded the enemy: they gnawed their quivers and bows, and thongs of the shields, so that the next day the Assyrians took flight, and many were destroyed *. This, however, seems to be a perverted account of the relation given in the sacred history †.

There are other dreams, which appear to have had a tendency to produce useful purposes; such are those related to have occurred to Themistocles when in exile. In one here alluded to, he is related, when advancing towards a city called Leontocephalus, or the

* Herod. L. ii. C. 141. † 2 Kings xix. 35.

Lion's Head, to have imagined in a sleep, into which he had fallen in the middle of the day, that he beheld the goddess Cybele, who advised him to fly the Lion's Head, unless he meant to fall into the Lion's jaws, requiring the dedication of his daughter Mnesiptoleme as an acknowledgment for the intimation. Themistocles, we are told, avoided the city in obedience to the suggestion, and thereby escaped the Pisidians, who had been engaged by Epixia the Persian to assassinate him *; and in grateful memory of the deliverance, built a temple in the city of Magnesia, which he dedicated to Cybele Dyndimene, appointing his daughter to be the priestess.

On another occasion, when concealed at Ægæ, a city of the Ætolians, he is reported to have dreamed, that Olbius, the tutor of the children of his host, appeared to him one

* Plut. in Themist.

night after a sacrificial feast, and in a prophetic rapture, uttered this verse:

"Counsel, O Night, and victory are thine!"

after which he also dreamed, that a dragon coiled itself round his body, and on creeping up his neck, and touching his face, was turned into an eagle, which spread his wings over him, and flew away with him to a distant place; where he beheld a golden sceptre, upon which he rested in security, and free from fear. The circumstances of the dream were supposed to have been completed in the escape of Themistocles from the house, by a stratagem of Nicogenes, in the covered carriage of a woman, and in his favourable reception by Artaxerxes.

Peticius, who received Pompey into his bark, when flying from the battle of Pharsalia, is said to have beholden, when in port at Larissa, in his sleep, on a preceding night, the vanquished hero unattended and wretchedly

clothed, approaching him *, and to have told the dream to his companions before its accomplishment.

Historians report of Artorius, or, as some style him, of Marcus Antonius Musa, the physician of Octavianus, afterwards Augustus, that Minerva appeared to him in a dream the night before the battle of Philippi, enjoining him to warn Octavianus not to omit being present at the battle, notwithstanding his severe disorder. In consequence of which Octavianus, being carried in his litter into the field, escaped from the soldiers of Brutus, who gained possession of his camp † with the expectation of killing him.

If we regard these as instances of a providential care of distinguished men, we must

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* Alexander ab Alex. Genial. Dier. L. ii. C. 26.

† Plutarch. Ant. C. 28. Valerius Maxim. L. vii. Velleius Patercul. L. ii.

consider the deities introduced to have been employed merely as machinery familiar to the heathen world, such being calculated to impress the persons to whom the warnings were addressed, and to engage their regard. Yet even upon this supposition we must conceive, that God encouraged indirectly a confidence in false deities.

But the dreams might be the effect of solicitude, casually productive of safety to the persons concerned. The recollection of the town in which Themistocles resigned himself to anxious sleep, and the hope of protection from Artaxerxes, might have contributed to his security; and the presence of Augustus at the battle of Pharsalia, must have been of so much advantage in encouraging the soldiers, and perhaps so much better for the patient than the anxiety of absence, that the physician might conceive it essential to success or recovery, and really imagine in his sleep, or politically fabricate the dream.

Alexander is related by historians to have dreamed, after committing himself to sleep with great solicitude in the chamber with his friend Ptolemy, who had been wounded in some engagement in the East, that he saw the figure of a dragon or serpent, which his mother Olympias cherished, and which she feigned to have been the father of Alexander, which presented him with a root that the monster carried in his mouth, as a remedy for the poison. Alexander described the colour of the herb, and affirmed that he should know it, if found; which, on its being accordingly discovered, he did, and applied it with success to the wound of his friend and others.

Alexander, desirous of exciting a salutary confidence in his friend, and of impressing his army with the idea of his influence with the gods, might contrive the dream, availing himself of the knowledge of some remedy of the country, perhaps communicated to him by the prisoners.

Such accounts, as Cicero observes, true or false, are too rare, and referable to casual circumstances, to authorise any idea of inspiration *.

Cicero, we are told, during his flight from Rome, being at Atina, imagined that he beheld in his sleep Caius Marius, preceded by the fasces bound with laurel, who encouraged him on his dejection at being obliged to leave his country, and consigned him to the care of a lictor, who was instructed to place him in the monument of Marius, where, it was said, was the hope of a better fortune. Sallust, on hearing the dream, is related to have foretold a speedy return to Cicero, which was soon afterwards effected by an unanimous decree of the senate, passed in the Marian Temple of Jove. The local correspondence, if correctly stated, was remarkable: Cicero, however, did not think it necessary to have recourse to any su-

* De Divin. L. ii. §. 68. Diod. Sicul. L. xvii. p. 575 Q. Curtius, L. ix. C. 27.

pernatural agency on this occasion, but conceived that the dream might be the production of a mind engaged in meditation on the fate and fortitude of Marius, with application, we may conceive, to the circumstances of his own fortune *.

There are also other dreams, which, however their circumstances might correspond with historical events that afterwards happened, can have no claim to be considered as inspired, since they might have produced their own accomplishment, being casual and vague, and verified by the operation of devotion, solicitude, or fear.

An instance mentioned by Cicero may be thus explained: Decius, the first consul of his family, in consequence of a dream, in which victory was promised to the army whose commander should devote himself to death, and

* Valerius Maxim. L. i. C. 7.

in which he appeared to fall with great glory in the midst of his enemies, rushed to destruction three years after in an engagement with the Latins, a victim to his superstitious credulity and rashness *.

Tacitus thinks it necessary to apologize for relating, that Curtius Rufus, when attending on a questor, who had obtained a department in Africa, was addressed in the retirement of a deserted portico at Adrimetum, in the midst of the day, by a female figure of supernatural appearance, who declared to him that he should come as consul into that province, which afterwards happened agreeably to the pretended prediction ‡.

There are some other dreams described in ancient accounts, which may be considered as the work of a creative fancy, occupied with anxiety on great events.

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* De Divin. L. i.

‡ Tacit. Annal. L. ii. C. 21.

Hannibal, we are told by Cicero, after a Grecian historian, dreamed, on the taking of Saguntum, that he was carried by Jupiter into the council of the gods, and there commanded by him to carry war into Italy: one of the heavenly council was appointed as a conductor in the expedition. Hannibal, on his march, was directed by his guide not to look back; but, prompted by human curiosity to disregard the instruction, he turned and beheld an horrible monster enfolded by serpents, and followed by a tremendous storm and darkness, which, wherever he proceeded, laid every thing waste. On inquiry Hannibal was informed, that the monster represented the devastation of Italy, but was directed to proceed, regardless of the effects of his march. What was this but a picture which might naturally present itself to the mind of the Carthaginians, pledged by a sacred oath to carry devastation into Italy*?

* Cicero de Divin. Liv. I. xxi. §. 22.

It would be well if conquerors in general would look to the horrors which must follow in the track of their ambition: it might check some at least in their destructive course.

When Cassius and Brutus were about to pass from Asia into Europe, in the dead of the night, while the moon reflected a feeble light on the silent camps, a black and horrible spectre is said to have appeared to Brutus, who sat musing in his tent concerning the event of the war, with a taper nearly extinguished placed before him. Brutus, with a firm tone, demanded what, either man or god, he was. The spirit answered, "Brutus, I am thy evil Genius; thou shalt see me again at Philippi." Brutus replied, "I will see thee there." The spirit accordingly re-appeared on the plains of Philippi the night before the last battle. The morning after the first vision, Brutus related to Cassius what he had seen, and expounded to him from the doctrine of the Epi-

cureans what was to be thought of such spectres *.

Cassius is reported to have seen in the same battle the figure of Julius Cæsar on horseback preparing to strike him, which terrified him to flight and suicide: but these and other accounts of apparitions, though they relate to the belief in preternatural interpositions, do not strictly come within the subject of our discussion, and we shall therefore wave the consideration of them.

The dream of Xenophon, in which he imagined that the fetters with which he was bound spontaneously broke, and which encouraged the troops of Cyrus when about to pass a river on the borders of Armenia, in defiance of the enemies, who harassed their retreat and obstructed their progress, might have been the

* Plutarch. in Brut. Lips. Mon. L. i. C. 5. p. 75.

result of solicitude, or the contrivance of policy. Xenophon, however, appears to have been impressed with a greater reverence for the existing superstitions than might have been expected from a disciple of Socrates.

Sylla, before his successful engagement with Marius, pretended to dream that he received from Pallas a thunder-bolt, the emblem of victory; and afterwards, in the same spirit, professed to have dreamed the night before he defeated the son of Marius, that he had seen him in a dream admonished by his father to avoid an action.

A dream of like nature is attributed to Judas Maccabæus, who, when about to engage with inferior forces the army of Demetrius, king of Syria, under the command of Nicanor, is related in the second book of Maccabees, a work of doubtful authority, to have beholden the high priest Onias, who was then dead, praying to God for the Jewish nation, and af-

terwards Jeremiah the prophet presenting him with a golden sword of conquest. In the confidence of the dream he is stated to have defeated the Syrians, with a slaughter of thirty and five thousand men *.

Pompey and Cæsar each dreamed before their final conflict, that he dedicated a temple to Venus, the victorious. The blind and lame men who applied to Vespasian at Alexandria, and are reported to have been miraculously cured by him, pretended to have been admonished in a dream by the god Serapis to address themselves to the emperor. The cure and the dreams were probably equally contrived to do honour to Vespasian †, whose elevation Josephus also professes to have predicted ‡.

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* Fulgosius. 2 Maccab. xv. 12.

† De Bell. Jud. L. iii. viii. et de Vit. §. 42. et Sueton. Vespas. C. 5.

Onomarchus, who excited the Phocæans to persevere in maintaining the possession of the treasury of Delphi, was encouraged in his design by a dream, in which the brazen Colossus, dedicated by the Amphyctions to Apollo, had by his hands been made higher and larger, which he considered as figurative of his exploits; but Diodorus Siculus, judging by the event, informs us, that it signified, that the mulct imposed by the Amphyctions upon the Phocæans for their sacrilege would be much advanced through Onomarchus; which, indeed, was as probable as the other *.

* Diod. Sic. L. xvi. C. 7.

CHAPTER V.

ON OTHER ANCIENT DREAMS OF A MISCELLANEOUS CHARACTER.

But it is an abuse of time to commit such dreams to paper.—*Vit. Tit. Livii. a Jac. Phil. Tomas. conscript. Verum enim vero, &c.*

THAT the pretensions of antiquity to the claim of inspired dreams may be fairly examined, another chapter or two should be assigned to some other accounts, which have been transmitted to us, with a show of authority, and which may equally be explained on very simple considerations.

The dream in which the apprehensions of Antigonus, king of Macedonia, foresaw the flight of Mithridates, the illustrious captive, whom after the conquest of Persia he detained

in his service, and whom he imagined to have seduced away the flower of his troops, may be referred to the jealous penetration of Antigonus, who might have detected the views of Mithridates, and whose sleeping thoughts might have revived the solicitude of the day.

The account is as follows:—Antigonus dreamed that he sowed gold in a spacious field, and that the seed sprung up, flourished, and ripened; but that soon after the golden harvest was reaped, and nothing left but the worthless stubble and stalks, and that then he heard a voice proclaim that Mithridates was fled to the Euxine Sea, carrying with him all the harvest: the king being awake, and exceedingly terrified, resolved to cut off Mithridates, and communicated the matter to Demetrius, exacting of him a previous oath of silence. Demetrius, who was favourably disposed towards Mithridates, met him on coming from the king. The young prince compassionated his friend, and was restrained only by a reverence for his oath from openly imparting the secret. Taking him,

however, aside, he wrote on the sand with the point of his spear, "Fly Mithridates." Admonished by these words, and the countenance of Demetrius, Mithridates fled into Cappadocia, and not long after founded the famous and powerful kingdom of Pontus, which continued from him to the eighth descent, the last Mithridates being with much difficulty overthrown by all the power and forces of the Romans *.

It may be incidentally remarked, that the conduct of Demetrius reminds us of the amiable kindness of Jonathan towards David, in counselling his flight from the envious jealousy of Saul †.

Some dreams may reasonably be ascribed to political contrivance, as those related by Herodotus to have occurred to Xerxes and Artabanus, on occasion of the Persian expedition into Greece. In the former a person of re-

* Plutarch. in Demetrio et Appian.

† 1 Sam. chap. xx.

markable stature and beauty is represented to have twice expostulated with Xerxes for wavering in his resolution, in consequence of the suggestions of Artabanus, who had urged the danger of the invasion; and on his determination to undertake the war, the wreath of an olive tree, whose branches covered the earth, is described to have crowned him in intimation of victory, as the Magi misinterpreted the fallacious omen. In the latter the same phantom remonstrated with Artabanus for endeavouring to prevent the execution of the design. Some writers consider this as the invention of Artabanus, willing to soothe the king by artfully acceding to his favourite scheme, but perhaps all may be regarded as the concerted fabrication of Xerxes and Artabanus, desirous of exciting a confidence in the public mind, by representing the expedition as countenanced by the gods*. If there were any thing preternatural in the

* Herod. L. vii. C. 12. §, 19.

dream, it was the suggestion of an evil spirit, which impelled Xerxes and his army to destruction.

* Julius Cæsar is reported to have projected the rebuilding of Carthage, in consequence of a dream in which he beheld a great army in affliction inviting him to the work, and Augustus is reported to have accomplished the design in regard to the memory of his uncle. But dreams which were related to have happened on the buildings of cities, and the establishment of colonies, were endless; upon which we may observe in the words of Livy, " As for those things which are related before the building of the city, which are more like poetical decorations than historical truths, I neither wish to affirm or refute them: we grant this indulgence to antiquity, that by mingling divine with human circumstances, it rendered the origins of cities more august †."

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* Appian. † Livii Hist. Pref.

The dreams which are said to have predicted the character and actions of illustrious men, appear often to be but nursery inventions, or the flatteries and embellishments of history.

Such as was that of Agariste, the mother of Pericles *, who dreamt before his birth that she was delivered of a lion; and to mention no more, those of Octavius and Attia, the parents of Augustus, the latter of whom fancied, the day before her delivery, that her bowels were carried up as high as heaven, and thence spread out to cover the earth †.

Almost all the Roman emperors professed to have had presages, or found others to proclaim the indications that foreshewed their greatness. The elegant flattery of Cicero beheld Octavianus, whom the favour of Cæsar had destined to the empire, let down in a

* Plut. in Pericles.

† Sabell. Ex L. i. C. i. P. 6.

golden chair from heaven*; and Quintus Catulus, another noble Roman, pretended to have seen Jupiter deliver into his hands, while yet a child, the ensigns of the Roman people†.

The auspicious dream of Trajan, who was crowned in his sleep, and of Hadrian, who experienced uninjured the descent of celestial fire‡; and of Antoninus, who fancied that he had shoulders and arms of ivory §; of Severus, who imagined that he mounted the horse which had thrown Pertinax to the ground ‖; and many others, that might be mentioned, carry the air of fiction; and are such as Cicero places on a footing with those of Æneas and Hecuba. They remind us of the dream which Euripides attributes to Iphigenia when in

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* Cicero De Divin. L. ii. §. 68. Diod. Sicul. L. xvii. P. 575.

† Dion. Cass. L. xlv.

‡ Dion. Cass. L. vi. §. 1. Xiphil. in August.

§ Dion. Cass. L. lxxi.

‖ Iphigen. in Tauris.

Tauris, in which she, fancying herself with her virgin followers at Aulis, beheld the roofs of Palaces shattered by an earthquake, and one column standing alone amidst the wreck of her father's house, expressive, as she conceived, of the death of Orestes.

These seem to have been imitated in later times, as in the dream of Arlotte, the mother of William the Conqueror, who fancied that her bowels were spread over all Normandy *; in that of the mother of the Maid of Orleans, who dreamed that she brought forth a thunderbolt; and lastly in that of the mother of Scanderbeg, who is said to have dreamed that she saw a serpent which covered all Epirus, his head being stretched over the Turkish dominions, where he devoured every thing with bloody jaws, his tail spreading over the Christian empire, and particularly affecting the Venetian empire †.

* Baker's Chron. P. 28.

† Barletii Hist. de Gest. Scand. L. i. C. 32. P. 130.

There are some other dreams of a similar description, which seem to have been contrived, like other auspicious omens, to excite confidence in military expeditions, and to shed a divine grace on conquerors. When Timoleon was about to sail from Corinth on an enterprize against Syracuse, the priestess of Proserpine had a dream, in which the goddess and her mother Ceres appeared in a travelling dress, promising to accompany Timoleon into Sicily; in respect to which dream a sacred galley was built, and called the Galley of the Goddess *.

Germanicus, the night before his victory over Arminius, is represented to have dreamed, that his robe being sprinkled with blood of a sacrifice which he performed, he received another more beautiful from his grandmother †.

Even savage nations appear to have availed themselves of this art. Thus among the

* Plutarch, in Timoleon.

† Tacit. Annal. L. ii. §. 14.

Tartars, who in ancient times lived in Imaus, a part of Mount Taurus, was a sort of lawless wandering shepherds, among whom were certain families, called Malgotz, leagued under chosen leaders, though subject to be oppressed by the neighbouring nations: among those a blacksmith of the name of Cangius, pretended to have seen in a dream a person in armour sitting on a white horse, who thus addressed him? "Cangius, it is the will of God that thou shouldest shortly be the king and ruler of the Tartars that are called Malgotz, thou shalt free them from that servitude under which they have long groaned, and the neighbouring nations shall become subject unto them." Cangius the next morning rehearsed his dream before the seven princes and elders of Malgotz. Being disregarded, all of them the next night seemed in their sleep to behold the person of whom he had told them, and to hear him commanding them to obey Cangius. Whereupon the princes assembling took the oath of allegiance, and entitled Cangius their first emperor, or in their language, Chan, from

whence the title was derived to his successors: the emperor freed his people, reduced Georgia and the greater Armenia, and afterwards wasted Polonia and Hungary *.

These accounts are equalled by others in later times. Ertucules, having slept after dinner, was confounded when he awaked with a dream; and having, according to the precepts of his religion, bathed his body to purify himself, repaired to Edebales, a person of great reputation for wisdom and sanctity, and thus addressed him. "I dreamed, venerable Sir, that the brightness of the moon did proceed from your bosom, and thence afterwards did pass into mine; when it was thither come, there sprung up a tree from my navel which overshadowed at once many nations, mountains, and valleys. From the root of this tree there issued waters sufficient to irrigate vines and

* See Gregor. de Repub. L. xix. C. i. §. 19. Herbert's Travels, L. vi. Purchas. Pilg. tom. i. L. iv. §. 2.

gardens, and there both my dream and my sleep forsook me." Edebales, after some pause, thus answered. "There will be born unto you, my good friend, a son whose name shall be Osman, he shall wage many wars, shall acquire to himself victory and glory, and your posterity shall be lords and kings of many nations, but my daughter must be married to your son Osman, and she is that brightness which you saw come from my bosom into yours, and from both sprung up the tree." The prediction is represented as the more remarkable for the emblem of the moon, since we know that the crescent is the chief and most remarkable ensign of the Turkish nation. The relation has the air of a pompous and idle tale, invented, probably, by the flattery of parasites or historians *.

Hatred and indignation have also fabricated dreams unfavorable to the character of tyrants.

* Lips. Marsil. L. i. C. 5. P. 70.

While Dionysius, the Syracusan, was yet in a private station, Himera, a woman of distinguished family, is said to have dreamt, that having ascended into heaven, and contemplated the seats of the gods, she observed a powerful man of a swarthy and freckled complexion bound by iron chains to the throne of Jove under his feet; on interrogating the youth who conducted her, she understood that he represented the dreadful fate of Sicily and Italy, and that when loosed he would occasion the destruction of many cities. The next day she published the account, and when the tyrant appeared as an evil spirit hurled from the chain of divine custody, Himera seeing him with a crowd, exclaimed, "This is he whom I have seen." This being told to Dionysius, provoked him to put her to death *.

Tiberius, Caligula, Nero, and Domitian, are each represented to have foreboded with

* Valer. Max. L. i. C. 7.

guilty apprehension in their dreams, the indignation of the gods, as manifested in their several fates.

Archelaus, having reigned ten years in Judea, was accused by his subjects to Cæsar of cruelty and tyranny, and was immediately summoned to his tribunal, his wealth seized, and he himself condemned to banishment. It was pretended, that this issue of his affairs had been before disclosed to him in a dream, in which he had seen ten ears of corn strong, full, and fruitful, which were eaten up of oxen, and which amidst different constructions, Simon, an Essæan, had interpreted to portend an unhappy change of affairs, as oxen were deemed emblems of misery, being creatures burthened with work; and emblems of change, because in ploughing they turn up the earth; the ten ears he represented to be so many years, in which time the harvest should be gathered, and the power of Archelaus be terminated *.

* Joseph. Antiq. L. xvii. C. 15. Zonaras, tom. i. P. 45.

The character of private individuals, and the fate of private families, have also been represented as objects of revelation by dreams.

Socrates, before he received Plato as his disciple, is said to have beheld a swan, which with growing feathers, and stretched out wings, raised himself up, and sang harmoniously; and a thousand instances of similar fictions might be produced.

The dream of Ecclinus, a Roman, which exhibited Rome, seated on its hills, gradually ascending by an increasing elevation, and afterwards diminishing again like melting snow, till it was dissolved, is stated to have been descriptive of the fortune of his family, as well as of the city, his sons being first distinguished by their victorious success, and afterwards rendered remarkable by their misfortunes.

Dion Cassius gratified by some commendatory letters written to him by Severus, artfully profeſſed to have dreamt that he was directed

by divine instruction to write the history of the emperor. He concludes his work also with these lines*:

> Jove snatch'd great Hector from surrounding spears,
> The rage of war, its tumult and its fears.

Which he represents his good genius to have dictated to him in Bythinia, commanding him to subjoin them as prophetic of his fortune †.

Plutarch relates, that during the building of the citadel at Athens, one of the most active and intelligent of the workmen, by falling from a great height, was so bruised that his life was endangered; upon which occasion Minerva appeared in a dream to Pericles, and prescribed a remedy, by the aid of which the man recovered. Pericles, probably, was willing to have the reputation of divine councils, and employed the name of Minerva to re-

* Dion. Cass. L. lxxii. † Dion. Cass. L. lxxx.

commend a prescription which his judgment approved*.

Diodorus Siculus relates, that a certain Scythian dreamt that Æsculapius had drawn the humours of his body to one place, or head, and was afterwards constrained to lance a festered imposthume.

Æsculapius was, indeed, supposed to assist the sick in their dreams†, and dreams which predicted, or pointed out the means of recovery, were thought to be not unfrequent. When Galen had an inflammation about the diaphragma, he was admonished in his sleep, we are told, to open the vein most apparent between the thumb and the four finger, and to take a quantity of blood from thence‡. He did so, and was restored to health. His reflections

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* Plutarch. in Pericles.

† Galen. de Sanit. tuend. L. i. C. 8.

‡ Schott. Phys. Curios. L. iii. C. 25. P. 501. Cœl. Rhod. Ant. Lect. L. xxvii. C. 49. P. 1250.

might have suggested "without a ghost" that bleeding would be of service in an inflammation, as they might also have taught him when consulted in the case of a swelled tongue, to direct a purge and cooling application, which probably had more effect than a gargle of lettuce juice which the megrim of his patient prompted him to have recourse to, in consequence of a dream at the same time, and from which he conceived that he derived great benefit*.

The emperor Marcus Antoninus says that he learned remedies for spitting of blood, and for dizziness, in his dreams †. Dreams similar to those above mentioned, are said to have happened in modern times, as Sir Christopher Wren, when at Paris in 1671, being disordered by a fever and retention of urine, and a pain in the reins, is reported to have sent for a physician, who advised him to let blood, thinking he had

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* Meth. de Tuend. L. xiv. C. 8. See also L. vii. in Precep.

† Τα δια ὑπνων.

a pleurisy, but bleeding being very disagreeable to him, he was determined to defer it a day longer; and is said to have dreamed that night that he was in a place where palm trees grew, and that a woman in a romantic habit reached dates to him; the next day he sent for dates which cured him of the pain in his reins; and many other tales of this description are related.

A Roman widow, we are told by Fulgosius, dreamed that as she walked in a garden at Rome, a root of the wild rose addressed her, and directed her to write to her son who was then on some military expedition in Spain, to instruct him that persons labouring under madness might be cured by that root. The widow, it is added, following the instruction of the dream, wrote a letter which opportunely reaching her son after he had been bit by a mad dog, preserved him just as the symptoms of the hydrophobia were beginning to appear *.

* The word used is Cynorrhodon, which signifies also the sweet briar, and the flower of the red lilly.—*Plin.* 25, 2, and 21, 5.

Cornelius Rufus, who was consul with Mannius Curius, is said to have dreamed, that he had lost his sight, and awoke blind: and another person, we are told, dreamed that he was bitten on the foot, and next day had a cancer. These, perhaps, were the forebodings of fear excited by pain, but what shall we say to the story of Marcus, the freedman, of the younger Pliny, who dreamed that some one sitting on his bed shaved him, and awoke well trimmed: we must agree with Fulgosius, that this was a miracle.

CHAPTER VI.

ON ANCIENT DREAMS, CONNECTED WITH IMPENDING DEATH.

The gates of Death are open night and day.
Dryden's Translat. of Æneid. B. 6.

THE dreams which have chiefly seized the imagination, and affected the credulity of mankind, have been those which appear to have been connected with impending calamities and death, and which, from the importance of their intention, have been thought to justify the supposition of preternatural inspiration, or of the enlargement of the divine powers of the mind, on its approach to the scenes of eternity and spiritual existence.

A belief in the reality of such intimations has very commonly obtained; but upon an ac-

curate consideration of the accounts conveyed to us from antiquity, it will derive little or no confirmation from pagan history, and appear not to have any foundation, except as established on the relations contained in those Scriptures, which record the testimonies of revealed religion.

As the prophetic declarations of the patriarchs, which occasionally revealed the fate of their descendants, were often delivered with their expiring breath, the idea originated in fact, and concurring with the most affecting apprehensions of mankind, was naturally cherished wherever it was conveyed by tradition.

Traces of the notion are discernible in the most ancient heathen writings. The heroes of Homer predict, at their death, the fate of their victorious adversaries.

Intimations of impending destruction were indeed universally believed to obtain, and various were the fancies of popular superstition.

Euripides, in his tragedy of Rhesus, represents the charioteer as describing himself, when he slept on the fatal night that Ulysses and Diomede dealt destruction in the Thracian camp, to have seen

"Forms tremendous hovering in his dream,"

and to have beholden

Two visionary wolves ascend
Those coursers' backs which he was wont to guide,
Oft lashing with their tails they forced them on;
Indignant breathing as they champed the bit,
And struggling with dismay.

Just images of the warriors, who

"Bore the steeds away, and glittering car."

The accounts, however, which appear to have had any claim to be considered as authentic, in addition to those before considered, are very few; such as they are, they shall be produced.

Herodotus relates, that Hipparchus, the son of Pisistratus, and brother of the tyrant

Hippias, the night before the festival of the Panathenæa, beheld in a vision an impressive figure, which admonished him in the following ambiguous terms of his approaching fate, to be inflicted on him by Aristogiton and Armodius, the assertors of public liberty.

> Brave Lion, thy unconquer'd soul compose,
> To meet, unmoved, intolerable woes.
> In vain th' oppressor would elude his fate,
> The vengeance of the gods is sure, though late*.

Aristotle relates, that Eudemius, a Cyprian and his friend, on arriving at Phæcas, a noble city of Thessaly, on his way to Macedonia, oppressed under the tyranny of Alexander, was taken so ill, that all the physicians despaired of his recovery, when he saw in his sleep a beautiful youth, who assured him that he would soon recover, and that Alexander would die in a few days, and Eudemius return home five years after; that it immediately happened that

* Beloe's Translation of Herod. B. v. Ch. 55.

Eudemius recovered, and the tyrant was slain by his wife's brother; and that towards the conclusion of the fifth year, when Eudemius began to hope, on the encouragement of his dream, to return from Sicily to Cyprus, he fell in battle at Syracuse; when, for the verification of the whole of the dream, it was interpreted, that the soul, on parting from the body, must be understood to return to its native place *.

Plato represents Socrates as saying, when in public custody, to Crito his friend, that he expected death on the third day; for that he had seen in a dream a woman of remarkable figure and beauty in a white vesture, who addressed him in a verse of Homer †, prophetic of his death, at that period.

Cyrus was a character too distinguished to

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* Fulgos. Ex. Lib. i. C. 5. p. 131.

† B. ix. l. 363.

disappear from the world without some omen to intimate his decease. Xenophon represents him, after having performed some religious offices, and distributed donations with his accustomed liberality to his subjects, to have dreamed, on retiring to sleep in his palace, that a person with a form more august than human appeared to him, and thus addressed him: "Prepare thyself, Cyrus, for thou art about to go to the gods." In the full persuasion that the dream was a divine warning, Cyrus is farther stated to have performed sacrifices to Jupiter and the Sun, and other gods, on the top of the mountains, as was the Persian custom; to have offered up thanks for the distinguished blessings which he had experienced, without being elated above the remembrance of the dependent condition of his nature; and to have supplicated an auspicious termination of his illustrious life, and blessings on his family, friends, and country. Three days after which, having delivered an impressive speech to his children, and the chief magistrates of

Persia, he expired *. This may be considered as one of those fictitious accounts with which historians are accustomed to embellish their works. The futility of these accounts is illustrated often by the circumstances and consequences which are described. Alexander, for instance, is said to have dreamed, that the hand of Cassander should be fatal to him. To what purpose could the intimation be given? It was not a punishment, for it afforded occasion only for a display of a generous disregard of the dream: it was not a salutary warning, for it excited no respect, and warded off no injury; and we may presume, that if a superior being had judged right to interfere for the security of the conqueror, he would have conveyed information that would have challenged attention †.

Equally fruitless was the intimation reported

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* Hist. L. viii.

† Valerius Maximus, L. i. C. 7.

to have been given to Aterius Rufus, a Roman knight, who, agreeably to a dream, was accidentally wounded at the Theatre by the trident of one of the Retiarii, who had compelled his adversary to the place where Aterius Rufus sat as a spectator *.

Valerius Maximus informs us, that Calphurnia, the neglected wife of Julius Cæsar, dreamed, on the night preceding the assassination of her husband, that she saw him lying in her bosom dead and covered with wounds: that in consequence she and others had incessantly entreated him to stay away the next day from the senate; but that he, unwilling to appear influenced by a woman's dream, or perhaps confiding in the fidelity of the public, went to the senate, and was murdered by Brutus and his associates. The flattery of Valerius represents this as an intimation from the gods of the approaching admission of

* Valerius Maxim. L. i. C. 7.

mature virtue into heaven; but we see nothing in the revelation of impending murder, that could convey grateful tidings to its object, and can consider it only as one of the many prodigies fabricated with lavish credulity on the death of the illustrious man.

There was not any greater use in the dream of the emperor Mauritius, who is said to have foreseen that he and his whole family should be killed by Phocas. The emperor, if he believed the dream to have been divinely suggested, was censurable for neglecting his danger, merely in consideration of the low condition of Phocas, who was a notary in his army, as the gods might be religiously believed to perform great actions by feeble instruments; but we know not on what ground he could be expected to regard the dream at all, though it is related, that he and his whole progeny were put to death agreeably to it by the command of Phocas *.

* Fulgos. L. i. C. 5. p. 124.

The fate of Caius Gracchus is said to have been denounced to him by his brother, who in a dream informed him, that he could not possibly escape the fate which had overwhelmed himself when driven from the Capitol *.

Who however does not see, that it might naturally happen, that Caius, conscious of the same guilty ambition with his brother, should be terrified with the forebodings of a mind apprehending the same fate?

So Caracalla, who was assassinated, is related to have dreamed, that his father threatened to kill him, as he had before slain his brother †.

Sylla, in his retirement at Cumæ, imagined in a dream, that he was summoned by Fate. In the apprehension of the accomplishment of his dream, he apprized his friends of his approaching death; and having made his testa-

* Valerius Maxim.

† Dion. Cass. L. vii.

ment he was seized with a fever, and expired on the night which succeeded his dream *.

Glaphyra, the wife of Archelaus before mentioned, who had been married to Alexander, his brother, and afterwards to Juba, king of Lybia, and who, on the divorce of Mariamne, had been united to Archelaus, dreamed that Alexander her first husband, by whom she had children, stood by her bedside, and said to her, "Glaphyra, thou hast eminently confirmed the truth of that observation, that wives are generally unfaithful to their husbands; for whereas thou wert married to me in thy virginity, and also hast children by me, thou didst yet make trial of a second match; and, not content with inflicting that injury upon me, hast taken to thy bed a third husband, and he my brother; but I will free thee from this reproach, and before long challenge thee for my own." Glaphyra, being troubled with

* Appian.

the dream, the effect of an awakened conscience, told it to the ladies of her acquaintance, and not long after expired, the victim probably of guilty fears. Josephus considers this dream as a certain argument of the immortality of the soul, and of Divine providence.

Vespasian, it is related, fancied in his sleep that he beheld a balance suspended in the imperial palace, in one scale of which were Claudius and Nero, and in the other the emperor and his sons; by which was understood to be intimated an equal allotment of period to the reigns of each party.

> But images in sleep deceive the mind,
> When friends removed by death we seem to find*.

The emperor Marcion is said to have dreamed, that he saw the bow of Attila, king of the Huns, broken; and soon after to have

* Lucret. L. v. l. 64, 65.

heard, that this scourge of the empire died on the night on which the dream occurred.

Upon the whole it appears evident, that the dreams here referred to are not sufficiently credible, important, and well authenticated, to demonstrate the reality of preternatural communications.

CHAPTER VII.

What I have described should be considered rather as the dreams of crazy persons, than as the judgments of philosophers.—*Cicero de Natur. Deor. L. i. Exposui fere, &c.*

UPON a collective retrospect of the accounts considered in the preceding chapters, it does not appear, that there is sufficient reason to suppose, that there was any preternatural interference displayed in the communication of the dreams referred to, or that the minds of the persons concerned were endowed with prophetic powers. The author has selected those which have the highest claim to regard, from their character, and the authority on which they are delivered; and after such an examination has but little hesitation in rejecting the pretensions of pagan antiquity to the illumination of prophetic dreams.

It is probable, that the philosophers of antiquity, who had no revelation to enlighten them, and who perceived the influence of those fears which result from a belief in the existence of a Supreme Power, and of the Divine superintendence and government of the world, were well inclined to encourage the popular notions which naturally prevailed on the subject; and notwithstanding accounts of inspired dreams were industriously collected, we find that very few of those which are transmitted to us with the most imposing reputation will bear a strict scrutiny. Some are evidently the contrivance of political or superstitious interests; many must be considered as fabulous tales of classical embellishment, and others, if received as real and unexaggerated, are resolvable into natural explications, or casual coincidences.

If any preternatural interposition be admitted, it must be that of evil spirits. The false dreams fabricated in support of religious inventions, only serve to argue the existence of

true visions, furnished with extraordinary impression in evidence of religion: they are copied from originals which deserve attention; but it is presumed that it may be maintained, that divine dreams were never imparted to the nations of antiquity, excepting in connection with the scheme of God's immediate and ostensible interference, as described in the sacred history of the earliest ages, and of the rise and progress of the Hebrew and Christian dispensations. They do not seem to have been furnished to pagan nations, unless where their interests were implicated with those of the Jews, but were reserved, together with other tokens of miraculous interference, in evidence of revealed religion.

The knowledge of the existence of such modes of communication might have been conveyed to heathen nations on the scattered leaves of tradition, and have given rise to the fictitious reports that prevailed of their continuance in the ordinary concerns of the world.

The desire of discovering future events is natural to the human mind, which is hurried on by a kind of divine impulse to futurity; artifice is ever ready to avail itself of this curiosity, and was especially so inclined among the heathen nations, whose bewildered minds turned with eagerness to every gleam of revelation.

The idea of divine dreams was traced up by them to the highest antiquity, and sometimes with indication of the vestiges of truth. Pliny represents Amphyction, the son of Deucalion, to have first displayed skill in the interpretation of them, while Trogus Pompeius ascribes the honour to Joseph, the son of Jacob, and Philo Judæus to Abraham.

The exposition of dreams was reduced to scientific principles, and practised by men who engaged in it as a profession. Some writers distinguish between "dreamers of dreams *,"

* Ονειροκριτοι.

and "expositors of dreams*," one of the latter description appears to have been deified for his skill; and many of them flourished with high reputation in early days near the Boristhenes, the Gades, and in Sicily.

The eastern nations, who might have beheld the very stones which served as pillows to those who were blessed with divine visions†, regarded dreams with punctilious veneration; and much of the reputed wisdom of their sages was shewn in the interpretation of them‡.

The Greeks and the Romans were also considerably influenced by dreams, and often acted in affairs of consequence on their suggestion. We find in Homer the idea that

"Dreams descend from Jove§."

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* Ονειροκριτοι. † Gen. xxviii. 11.

‡ Dan. ii. 2, 3.

§ Pope's Homer, B. i, l. 86, and note.

and see Nestor, the oracle of Wisdom, exhorting the Grecians in council to attend to the dream of Agamemnon, which had enjoined a battle *. In succeeding times almost every sect, excepting that of Epicurus, admitted their claim to reverence, and the vulgar regarded them with the most implicit credulity.

Plutarch informs us, that in consequence of a dream of Arimnestus (who was general of the Platæans, when the Grecians were confederated against the Persians), in which Jupiter Soter informed him, that the country round Platæa was the district pointed out by the oracle at Delphi as the scene of victory, the Platæans altered the boundaries which separated their country from Greece, in order to enlarge the territories of Attica, that the Athenians might, according to the direction of the oracle, give the enemy battle within their own dominions †.

* Iliad. B. 2.

† Plutarch. in Aristidis.

The superstitious regard paid to dreams by the Grecians in general was carried to a great extent. When Pelopidas was encamped with his army on the plains of Leuctra, he dreamed, before his engagement with the Lacedæmonians, that he beheld the daughters of Scedasus, who were called the Leuctrides, weeping at their tombs, and loading the Spartans with execrations, because some of that nation, having despoiled them of their virgin honour, had driven them to suicide; and at the same time their father Scedasus commanded him to sacrifice a young red-haired virgin to his daughters, if he desired to obtain the victory. As many of the soothsayers and commanders recommended a literal compliance with the dream, it would probably have been productive of a sanguinary oblation, had not a diviner of the name of Theocritus happily proposed the sacrifice of a wild filly with a red mane, which casually broke into the camp, or was designedly introduced, and which he represented as the victim which the gods had provided and required *.

* Plutarch. in Pelopid.

Euripides represents Hecuba to have had a dream before the sacrifice of Polyxena had been required to appease the shade of Achilles. She thus describes it:

With bloody fangs I saw a wolf, who slew
A dappled hind, which forcibly he tore
From these reluctant arms; and what increased my fears
Was, that Achilles' spectre stalked
Upon the summit of his tomb, and claimed a gift,
Some miserable Trojan captive *.

Popular opinions varied much as to the origin and nature of dreams: the Peripatetics represented them to arise from a presaging faculty of the mind, which, as an oracular power excited by a divine fury, or released and liberated from the body in sleep, perceived future events. Other sects imagined, that dreams, as well as oracular suggestions in general, proceeded from demons, of which, upon the idea of Thales the Milesian, adopted by Plato, the world was full, and which, ac-

* Euripides' Hecuba, Woodhull's Translat.

cording to the Platonic fancies, sustained a middle character between gods and men; and some of them were supposed to be the shades of departed heroes, and distributed into benevolent and malignant beings; the former appointed to watch over the welfare of individuals, and the latter permitted to molest and to delude them by fallacious and deceptive visions like that before mentioned, which Homer represents to have seduced Agamemnon to lead out the Grecian troops in the vain hope of the immediate destruction of Troy.

Upon such a subject the imagination had no limits, and the most wild and extravagant conceits that could be imagined were often received with wonderful credulity. The whole of the Pagan mythology, composed of the contexture of oriental and Grecian fictions, was embellished, if not fabricated by poetical invention; and in its translation from Grecian to Roman literature, was decorated with additional colourings; ornaments of fancy became objects of religious reverence, and poetry

enlarged the structure of superstition. Thus what was concerted in figurative allusion, was misinterpreted to imply real existence, and the Pantheon, or Pandemonium of Antiquity, was peopled with a

> " Thousand demigods on golden seats,
> Frequent and full."

The heathens worshipped Sleep under different images of a god, or goddess. The rites observed towards them originated, probably, in that early respect which was paid to dreams. The bold imagination of Homer conceived, that impending circumstances were to be found in dreams, and that

> Immured within the silent bower of Sleep,
> Two portals firm the various phantoms keep,
> Of iv'ry one; whence flit to mock the brain,
> Of winged lies, a light fantastic train:
> The gate opposed pellucid valves adorn,
> And columns fair incas'd with polish'd horn;
> Where images of truth for passage wait,
> With visions manifest of future fate *.

* Dacier from Eustathius supposes, that by horn, which is transparent, Homer means the air or heavens, which are

Virgil adopted the idea.

Two gates the silent house of Sleep adorn,
Of polished iv'ry this, that of transparent horn:
True visions through transparent horn arise,
Through polish'd iv'ry pass deluding lies *.

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translucent; and that by ivory he denotes the earth, which is gross and opaque. Thus the dreams which come from the earth, that is through the gate of ivory, are false: those from heaven, or through the gate of horn, true. Pope imagines that this fable was built upon a real foundation, that there were places called the gates of Falsehood and Truth at Memphis, in Egypt, from whence Homer draws some of his allusions.—See note on Pope's Odyss. B. 19. The author of the Archæologiæ Atticæ conceives that the gate of horn was suggested by the horns of the ram which was sacrificed to Amphiaraus and Chalcas, and Podaliris, after which the votaries slept on the melotie, or fleeces, L. vii. C. 3. and Strabo, L. vi. The Scholiast on Homer represents the horn to be a fit emblem of truth, as being transparent when thinned; the ivory a proper figure of falsehood, as opaque. Some by κεράς understand the eye, the cornea tunica; and by ἐλαφὰς the mouth and teeth, that which is seen appearing to be more certain than that which is spoken.

* B. 6. Dryden's Translat.

Philostratus tells us, that in allusion to these doors it was customary to represent in pictures a dream personified in a white garment upon a black one with an horn in his hand.

The fictions of poetry were, however, endless, and varied with much luxuriance of fancy. Virgil elsewhere conceived that

> Full in the midst of the infernal road
> An elm display'd her dusky arms abroad,
> The god of sleep there hides his heavy head,
> And empty dreams on every leaf are spread *.

The elm was by some supposed as a barren tree, to be expressive of the vanity of dreams. Servius, on the authority of Aristotle, represents them to be especially fallacious on the fall of the leaf in autumn.

From the elm, on the leaves of which dreams were supposed to be spread, or under the shadow of which their embodied forms were

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* B. 6. Dryden's Translat.

represented to sit, Morpheus, the servant of Sleep, was sometimes described as bringing them to present to the minds of those who slept, exhibiting, as his name imported, the forms of men:

"And none than he more skilful to express
Men's gestures, language, countenance, and dress."

Ovid paints Night as a figure of which the temples were encircled by poppies, and as accompanied by a multitude of dreams*. Tibullus represents sleep and dreams as attending the car of Night:

"Now Night leads out her steeds, her car ascends,
A glittering circle of the stars attends;
Next Sleep with dusky wings doth silent move,
And sable dreams around uncertain rove."

Sleep, though here described as moving slowly, is elsewhere portrayed with wings, as Statius addresses it:

"Let not thy pinion o'er mine eyes be spread,
But a soft influence from thy rod be shed†."

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* Metamor. Lib. ii. l. 364.

† Statius Sylv. L. v. Consult also Imagin. Deor. P. 121.

Sleep was generally regarded as a female figure with black expanded wings, she was also sculptured as holding in her left hand a white child, and in her right hand a black child with distorted feet, the former being the image of sleep, the latter of death. A very common notion that prevailed was, that visions rose from the regions below. The queen, according to the present reading of the Hecuba of Euripides, thus addresses the earth:

" Venerable earth
Parent of dreams that flit on raven wing *."

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* Woodhull's Trans.

Ὦ σεβάσμια χθών,
Μελανοπτερύγων μᾶτερ ὀνείρων. *Hecub.*

Mr. Porson, in his late valuable edition, proposes to read,

ὦ σκοτιὰ νυξ
Μελανοπτερύγων μᾶτερ ὀνείρων.

For which, however, there is no sufficient reason, since the χθόνιοι θεοί, invoked immediately after by the distressed mother, might be conceived to suggest ill-omened dreams, which were commonly supposed to arise from the earth, and in a more direct way than the scholiast on Euripides derives them when he says, ἐκ μὲν τῆς γῆς οἱ τροφοί, ἐκ δὲ τῶν τροφῶν οἱ ὕπνοι, ἐκ δὲ τῶν ὕπνων οἱ ὄνειροι. From the earth comes meat, from meat sleep, from sleep dreams.

As various were the opinions of the ancients concerning the residence of the imaginary deity of sleep, Homer places it in Lemnos, Ovid among the Cimmerians, Statius among the Æthiopians, Philostratus describes it as abiding in the cave of Amphiaraus, where was the gate of Sleep, and where day and night were represented by a figure in which the white vest was drawn over the black; where Sleep was exhibited in a four wheeled carriage: it was with allusion, probably, to the four paths of the watches of the night.

The notions concerning the origin and cause of dreams were diverse as the authors who treated of them, among whom were Aristotle, Themistius, Artemidorus, Democritus, Lucretius, and others. Some of these writers supposed them to be formed of spectres, or images, emitted from corporeal things, which floating in the air, permeated, as it were, to the mind; some fancied them to be divine intimations, and others, with an unintelligible jargon, "æthereal essences."

Whatever were the notions as to the productive and efficient cause of dreams, the ancients watched for them with considerable anxiety, and endeavoured by every observance to procure such as might be clear and distinct. The ὀνειρος, or morning dream, was particularly regarded as significant on the idea expressed by Pope:

> "What time the morn mysterious visions brings,
> While purer slumbers spread their golden wings."

upon the conviction mentioned by Pliny, that a dream was never true which obtained after eating and drinking; it was not unusual to fast a day, and to abstain from wine three days, before a divine dream was sought.

It was customary also for those who wished to obtain inspired dreams, to lie down after the performance of religious rites upon the skins of beasts sacrificed, in expectation of the divine suggestions, as was the case at the temples of Amphiaraus in Attica, Æsculapius in Pergamos, of Serapis in Canopus, and

others; as also at that of Faunus, of which we learn from Virgil that the shades were

> " renown'd for prophecy,
> Which near Albunea's sulph'rous fountain lie.
> To these the Latian, and the Sabine band,
> Fly when distress'd, and thence relief demand.
> The priest on skins of offerings takes his ease,
> And nightly visions in his slumbers sees;
> A swarm of thin etherial shapes appears,
> And flutt'ring round his temples deafs his ears.
> These he consults the future fates to know
> From power's above, and from the fiends below."

And here the poet represents Latinus to have repaired for directions to the god concerning the disposal of his daughter, when solicited in marriage by Æneas and Turnus.

The idea of thus obtaining revelation was derived from some acquaintance with the Hebrew modes of procuring communications from God. Strabo represents the temple of Jerusalem as a place where divine dreams were imparted, and it is probable that, as Mr. Pope observes, he had received some

information of the visions of the prophets, as of that which Samuel had concerning the destruction of Eli's house, or that which Solomon obtained after having sacrificed before the ark. It should be remembered, however, that Isaiah reprehends as an idolatrous practice, the custom of sleeping among the graves and monuments for the sake of dreams *.

Whatever difference of sentiment prevailed as to the origin of dreams, there was a general concurrence of popular opinion both among Greeks and Romans, as well as eastern nations, not only that they bore a relation to future events, but that where they were inauspicious in their denunciations the omen might be averted by supplications and sacrifices, and the calamities which they were supposed to portend be avoided. Brizo, the goddess of sleep or dreams, was worshipped with divine honors and sacrifices, and her votaries slept in her temple

* Isaiah lxv. 4, in the Septuagint, it is ἐν τοῖς μνήμασι καὶ ἐν τοῖς σπηλαίοις κοιμᾶσθαι διὰ ἐνύπνια.

at Delos with their heads bound with laurel, or other fatidical appendages. The Sun was addressed with conciliating prayers, as its beams dispersed the dreams of the night. Supplications were offered up to Mercury at the conclusion of festivals for a night of good dreams, and images of that deity with his Caduceus was placed at the feet of beds, hence called ἑρμῖνες *. Bathing also, and lustrations were practised as auspicious; and Æschylus, in Aristophanes, directs the attendants to prepare a lamp and warm water taken from the river, which were to be employed in some ceremonies designed to avert the influence of divine dreams. In a fragment of Euripides we see Priam, on occasion of the dream of Hecuba, in which she brought forth a flaming torch:

> " Smitten with dread, and anxious care to heaven
> Present the bleating victims, sue for peace,
> And ask if any prophet having prayed
> To Phœbus, could inform him what events
> Such a portentous vision could produce."

* Archæolog. Atticæ, a Francis Rous, p. 352, L. vii. C. 4.

And the royal father is represented to have obtained an answer from Apollo forewarning him of the destruction which Paris should bring on his country *.

In the Miles Gloriosus of Plautus, we find Palæstrio directing Philocomasium to supplicate the gods, in order to avert the effects of a dream †. No less respect was paid to dreams among the Romans than among the Greeks ‡. Sylla, in his Commentaries, inscribed to Lucullus, endeavoured to excite his reverence for them; and Propertius, and other poets, strengthened the general credulity concerning them §.

At length, however, it became a principle adopted among the Romans upon the multiplication of dreams, that none which related to

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* Fragment of Euripid. Wodhull's Translat.

† Act ii. Sc. 4. See also Act i. Sc. 1.

‡ Plutarch's Life of Sylla.

§ Life of Pompey.

the public weal should be regarded, unless they were seen by magistrates, or at least by more than one individual. The principle was sometimes deserted, as it is not easy to limit the credulity of superstition. Cicero informs us, that within the memory of his contemporaries, Lucius Julius, who was consul with Publius Pompilius, repaired the temple of Juno Sospita, in obedience to a decree of the senate enacted from respect to a dream of Cæcilia, the daughter of Balearicus *.

Notwithstanding the general respect paid to dreams among the ancients, it appears that some of the more philosophical minds considered them as futile and vain; and conceived that divine inspirations were more likely to be conveyed to the waking, than to the sleeping thoughts, and that if the gods had sent dreams they would have enforced more respect to them, and have furnished some unequivocal rules of interpretation.

* De Divinat. L. i.

Theophrastus represents it to be a part of the character of a superstitious man to enquire, on receiving a dream, to what God he should perform his vows*; and Cicero, after eloquently stating each side of the question, rejects the idea of their being subservient to divination.

If the general futility of dreams were not sufficiently manifest from their own nature, it would be fully exposed by the fanciful and precarious principles upon which they were interpreted. Every casual correspondence between dreams and events was noted, and construed into a precedent for future explication; sometimes they were explained by contraries, and sometimes they were literally expounded. It appears from a passage in Plutarch's Life of Aristides, that certain tables were used for the interpretation of dreams; as he speaks of one Lysimachus, a grandson of Aristides, who sitting near the temple of Bacchus gained his livelihood by it: we may form some idea of

* Nat. Hist. L. vii.

the egregious trifling which was shewn in the art, from the rules of interpretation attributed to Artemidorus, if genuine, who lived in the reign of Antoninus Pius, and which are transmitted to us as the result of deep observation and experience *. The whole mystery of his art, if we may judge from those, consists in the conclusion drawn from some ordinary recurrences of events, and from the application of things reputed significant, by which circumstances were represented as auspicious, or ill-omened, respectively as the dreams were composed of things superstitiously so regarded —thus for instance in this childish theory, to dream of a fair and great nose intimates subtlety —of rosemary and sage, trouble and weakness —of a midwife, disclosure of secrets—of a leopard, an artful man. It may be easily con-

* Polydore Virgil. de Invent. Rerum. L. i. C. 24. Cum Somnium quod ominosum videretur, vel ipsi vel alii habuissent, scribebant, et observantes quomodo eveniret, et si quando postmodum hujus simile obtigisset, exemplo prioris putabant eventurum. See also Fabricii Biblioth. Graec. L. iv. C. 13.

ceived, that an art so vague was often accommodated to the inclination and feelings of those whom it was the interest of interpreters to gratify.

The mother of Dionysius, the tyrant of Syracuse, dreamed that she brought forth a satyr; and the Sicilian interpreters, called Galeotæ *, explained the dream to import, that her son should be the most illustrious and prosperous among the Greeks †.

Hippias, the leader of the barbarians to the plains of Marathon, fancied in a vision that he slept with his mother; and the popular construction led him to expect a return to prosperity, and a peaceful death at Athens ‡. A similar dream is attributed to the emperor Claudius.

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* It is remarkable that the word Galeotæ, or Galei, is derived from the Hebrew root גלה which signifies to reveal.

† Herdfield in Sphia. C. 32. P. 893.

‡ Herod. L. v. C. 55.

Philip of Macedon dreamed that he placed a seal upon his wife; he expounded his dream to signify, that his wife should be barren, but Aristonides, a soothsayer, interpreted it that it imported the pregnancy of his wife, inasmuch as empty vessels are not sealed.

Domitian dreamed a few days before his death that a golden head rose upon the nape of his neck, which was applied to prefigure the golden age which followed in the reigns of his five successors*.

As to Cesar's dream (says Bacon, the profound writer from whom I have borrowed the two preceding articles,) I think it was a jest, it was that he was devoured of a long dragon, and it was expounded of a maker of sausages that troubled him exceedingly†. We shall conclude with the just remark of this great man, that the more it appears that divination

* Bacon's Works, vol. iv. p. 5.

† Bacon, vol. iii. p. 354.

has been polluted by vanity and superstition, the more we should receive and preserve its pure part *.

* Bacon, vol. ii. p. 57.

CHAPTER VIII.

OF INSPIRED DREAMS WHICH WERE RENDERED SUBSERVIENT TO DIVINE REVELATION, AND CONTRIBUTED TO THE ESTABLISHMENT AND SUPPORT OF THE HEBREW DISPENSATION.

And the Lord came down in the pillar of the cloud, and stood in the door of the Tabernacle and called Aaron and Miriam; and they both came forth, and he said, Hear now my words: if there be a prophet among you, I the Lord will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream.—*Numbers, xii.* 5. 6.

THAT dreams were employed by God for the conveyance of his instructions to mankind from the earliest ages is indisputable, and though we are inclined to reject those dreams which are related in profane history, as not the result of preternatural suggestion, it is certain that the

distinctions laid down by Macrobius had a foundation in reality. It appears also, that however we may deny that God imparted his immediate suggestions to those who were not subjected to his especial direction, or had a connection with the great scheme of revelation; yet we may still admit that the Grecian and Roman persuasions of the existence of inspired dreams were well founded, though formed only on a traditional knowledge of those modes which were occasionally adopted by God for the communication of the particulars that illustrated his designs.

The visions which were imparted to Abraham and others*, in which the word of the Lord is represented to have addressed them, and they themselves to have spoken; and which seem to have happened as well during the day as after "the sun was gone down, and a deep sleep fell" on the favoured person†, may be

* Gen. xv. xx. 3—7. xxvi. 24.

† Gen. xv. xl. 1—5. Numb. xxiv. 4—16. See also Acts xxii. 2—17. 1 Kings iii. 5. Job xxxiii. 14—16.

classed under the third distribution of Macrobius, which represented oracular communications to obtain, when in sleep, some venerable or sacred person or deity, foreshewed future events, or gave directions as to what should be done or avoided. The figurative and mysterious vision which represented the majesty of God ascendant above ministering angels, and pronouncing to Jacob the increase and dispersion of his seed, and the blessings to be derived through his race to mankind, may be ranged under the same division *, as may also the grand religious expostulation thus finely described by Eliphaz in the book of Job.

" Now a thing was secretly brought to me, and mine ear received a little thereof.

" In thoughts from the visions of the night, then deep sleep falleth on men.

* Gen. xxviii. xxxi. 11—13. 24.

" Fear came upon me and trembling, which made all my bones to shake.

" Then a spirit passed before my face; the hair of my flesh stood.

" It stood still, but I could not discern the form thereof: an image was before my eyes, there was silence, and I heard a voice, saying,

" Shall mortal man be more just than God? Shall a man be more pure than his Maker?

" Behold, he putteth no trust in his servants; and his angels he chargeth with folly.

" How much less in them that dwell in houses of clay, whose foundation is in the dust, which are crushed before the moth?

" They are destroyed from morning to evening: they perish for ever without any regarding it.

" Doth not their excellency which is in them go away? They die even without wisdom *!"

The dreams furnished by divine favour to Joseph, in which the sheaves and stars performed an obeysance expressive of the reverence that was to be paid to his elevation †, as well as those which were furnished to the officers of Pharoah ‡, and to the king himself §, may be placed under the first distinction of Macrobius, that of dreams, properly so called, which were described to be mysterious representations requiring expositions, and subservient to divination; and under this class may justly be arranged also the mysterious and enigmatical visions of Daniel, Ezekiel, St. John, and other prophets.

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* Job iv. 12, &c.

† Gen. xxxvii. 6. 7. 9, comp. with Gen. xlii. 6. xliii. 26. 28. xliv. 14. l. 8.

‡ Gen. xl. 5.

§ Gen. xli. 1—5.

The dream indeed which was especially so denominated, was in its original import deemed to be prophetical of real circumstances, as the very derivation of the word intimates importing to speak truth *; but so many fictions were invented even among the Jews during the time of the prophets, that dreams became proverbially represented as truth mingled with falsehood, as wheat mixed with straw †.

The term vision, which Macrobius considers as a prophetic representation of events exactly foreseen, is employed by the sacred writers as generally expressive of revelation however imparted. "In a dream," says Elihu, "in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men in slumberings upon the bed ‡, then

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* Ονειρος, from ον, truth, and ειρειν, to speak.

† Jerem. xxii. 32. xxiii. 28. Sicut impossibile est ut sit Triticum sine Paleâ, ita fieri non potest ut sit somnium absque verbis falsis. Porta Mosis, P. 23.

‡ Job xxxiii. 15. 17. In the Septuagint it is εν μεσηι νυκτερινη. Psal. lxxix. 19. 1 Kings iii. 5. 13.

he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction." Specific instances which may suit the exact definition of the Latin writer, are furnished in the account of the vision in which God communicated to Abraham the sojourning of his multiplied descendants four hundred years in Egypt, their coming out, and his own death in a peaceful old age *; or in that in which a consolatory assurance was imparted to Israel, that he should go into Egypt, and that his son Joseph should close his eyes †; or if we restrict the term to the revelations communicated by day to the waking senses, we may refer to the miraculous vision imparted to St. Paul on his journey to Damascus, when even the men who accompanied him saw the light and heard the voice, though not the distinct words, it should seem, which addressed him.

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* Gen. xv. 13. 16.

† Gen. xlvi. 24. See also 1 Sam. iii. 1 Kings iii. 5. Luke i. 8. 22. Acts x. 12.

Examples of the fourth and fifth description, as unconnected with any design or pretence of revelation, must be sought for in the perturbed slumbers of anxiety, or in the reveries of a confused and dozing imagination.

There are certainly dreams mentioned in Scripture of so ambiguous a character, that it would be a subject of intricate discussion to reduce them to any exact distinction: this indeed is not necessary, the communications afforded to the prophets, and consigned to the regard of future ages, in Scripture, whether dreams, or visions, or oracles; whether figuratively or literally prophetic, were unquestionably inspired, and subservient to divine revelation, they had the criterion of truth as tending to advance the service of the true God, and the real interests of men, though opposed by those of false prophets whom God permitted to prove the Israelites*; whether by dreams

* Deut. xiii. 1—3. Zech. x. 2. Jerem. xxiii. 25—28.

preternaturally suggested, or casually predictive, does not appear; and who prophesied also false dreams, causing the people to err by their lies and by their lightness, not sent by God, nor commanded by him *.

The first and immediate predictions of the true prophets were often accomplished during the lives of those to whom they were furnished, and such parts were usually so clear, and accompanied with such explanations, as enabled the prophet to understand them, and to interpret them if furnished to uninspired persons, while the distant allusions by which they gilded the remoter scenes of the divine scheme were often, perhaps, of questionable character to the prophets themselves.

Great caution was recommended by God to his people in the examination of the pretensions of the prophets and dreamers who affected

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* Isaiah xxiii. 32.

inspiration. The "nations which thou shalt possess," said the Almighty, "hearkened unto observers of times and diviners, but as for thee the Lord thy God has not suffered thee to do so*;" and when God forewarned them against those who prophesied lies, he established the tendency of the instruction as the test of truth.

If we consider the object and intention of the dreams recorded in sacred history, they appear to us worthy of, and consistent with the declared designs of God, connected with the plan of his miraculous dispensation, and constituting part of the great scheme of prophecy. Where they were imparted to those not in immediate subjection to that dispensation which was ratified by miraculous testimonies, they still were appropriated to the signalizing of God's professed cause and servants, by the interpretation of the prophets, and bore often a reference to the Messiah.

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* Deut. xviii. 11.

This appears in the memorable instances of the dreams of Nebuchadnezzar, the first of which, as explained by Daniel, developed the character of successive kingdoms which were to be introductive to the dominion of Christ*; and the second revealed a signal decree of a corrective judgment against an unrighteous and inflated prince, which none but a prophet, emboldened by an inspired confidence, would have ventured to interpret and apply†: on other occasions the dreams imparted to the individual bore a reference to national dispensation. God on those occasions condescended to employ true visions to the discountenancing of those who trusted in false dreams, as in Egypt he permitted Moses to defeat the Egyptian magicians by their own arts.

There are some accounts in Scripture which have been considered as descriptive of visionary representations, but which should perhaps

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* Dan. ii. 4. † Dan. iv.

rather be understood as narrative of actual events, such are some of those which relate to the appearance of superior beings, as where angels are recorded to have visited or encountered favoured persons for encouragement or trial, as in some of the appearances vouchsafed to Abraham and Lot and others *, and particularly in the instance of God's host which met Jacob, or in that of the man wrestling with him; in which accounts there is no intimation that the scene was not real, and in the latter instance the proofs of a real agency were sensibly demonstrated in the disjointing of Jacob's thigh †.

Some Jewish writers, indeed, who restrict the modes of divine communication with design to elevate the pretensions of Moses to an exclusive height, consider all communications which were not imparted to their great Law-

* Gen. xvii. 22. xvi. 19. xviii. 22. Joshua v. 13—15. Jud. vi. xiii. Job xxxviii.

† Gen. xxxii. See also iii. 8. xix. 5. Acts xii. 9.

giver as referring to representations in dreams, or visions *; though the Scriptures in no place will authorize such restrictions, and in many instances afford us proof to the contrary †.

There are some accounts also of dreams represented to have contributed to establish the fame of the Hebrew dispensations, which are not recorded by sacred writers, and which may be received, or rejected, without affecting the theory which we support. Such, for instance, is the dream related by Josephus to have occurred to Alexander at Dio, in Macedonia, in which a figure habited like the high priest of the Jews, encouraged him to proceed in his Persian expedition with assurance of success; in consequence of which, on meeting the high priest Jaddua on his approach with hostile intentions to Jerusalem, he adored the name of Jehovah inscribed on the sacred mitre,

* Numbers xii. 6. 2 Sam. vii. 4—17. Maimon. More Nevoch. P. 2. C. 41.

† 2 Sam. xxviii. 6. 15.

declaring the dream which he had beheld, and not only pardoned the Jews for having withholden the assistance which he had requested at the siege of Tyre, but granted great privileges to them *.

This might have been a fiction of Hebrew vanity, or an artful stratagem of Alexander, who must have heard of the wonderful marks of divine interference manifested towards the Jews, and have been anxious to animate his soldiers with a religious confidence.

The remembrance of the inspired dreams which had conveyed divine instruction to their forefathers, led the Jews to entertain a superstitious reverence for dreams long after miraculous modes of revelation had ceased among them. Whoever had a dream which seemed to portend calamities, and afflicted his mind, imposed a fast on himself on the following

* Joseph. Antiq. L. xi. C. 8.

day, even though it were the Sabbath, on which day fasting was not permitted for any other cause. In the evening, before the taking of any food, after the period of fasting was expired, it was customary among them, for the person to whom the dream was imparted, to assemble three friends, to whom he said, "I have had a good dream," repeating this seven times, they as often answering, "Thou hast had a good dream, it is well, be it good. Let it become good, may the merciful God make it good, that it may be good and become good;" adding afterwards, for an auspicious omen, from the twelfth verse of the thirtieth Psalm, "To the end that my glory may sing praise to thee, and not be silent. O Lord, my God, I will give thanks unto thee for ever:" and from the thirtieth verse of the thirty-first chapter of Jeremiah, "Then shall the virgin rejoice in the dance, both young men and old together, for I will turn their mourning into joy, and will comfort them, and make them rejoice from their sorrow;" and concluding with the seventh verse of the Book of Eccle-

siastes, "Go thy way, eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart, for God now accepteth thy works." This they call the benefaction of a dream.

If they had a dream of ambiguous character, so that they could not determine whether it were good or bad, they had a peculiar form of prayer in which they prayed God to turn it to their good; these forms are in their Books of Prayer *.

* Buxtorf. Synagoga Judaica. C. 13.

CHAPTER IX.

ON INSPIRED DREAMS WHICH CONTRIBUTED TO THE CONFIRMATION AND ADVANCEMENT OF THE GOSPEL.

It cannot be that when such providence appears in lesser concerns, it should be found wanting in those of chief consideration, but the prophecies and cures of diseases which have been manifested in the world proceed from the good providence of God.—*Sallust. Philosoph. de Diis et Mundo, αδυνατον δε*, &c. p. 70.

As it appears to have been designed that the second dispensation should not be defective as to any proofs which might demonstrate its divine authority, inspired dreams, such as those which had been imparted in preceding communications of God's will, were furnished in testimony of the Gospel, and are described as the effect of the operation of the Spirit. The

gracious scheme was introduced indeed by divine dreams, which afforded an assurance of the miraculous conception of our Lord *, and the birth of his forerunner †, and it was afterwards supported by a frequent display of God's interference manifested in vision ‡.

These were consistent with the intimations of prophecy: Joel speaking of the times of the Gospel, had thus predicted in God's name, "Behold it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions, and also upon the servants and the hand maids, in those days will I pour out my Spirit §; and this appears to have been sufficiently fulfilled, as well by the instructions conveyed in dreams to St. Peter,

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* Matt. i. 20. † Luke i. 11—22.

‡ Matt. ii. 12, 19. xxvii. 19.

§ Joel ii. 28, 29. comp. with Acts ii. 16, 17.

St. Paul*, and others, as by the miraculous descent and influence of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost.

It deserves to be remarked, that the dreams mentioned in Scripture, which were subservient to prophetic revelation, were of the most part composed of objects previously familiar to the minds of the favoured person, though so combined as to be representative of future events. As in the instance of the vision imparted to Peter, in which he beheld a vessel descending unto him, wherein were all manner of four-footed beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air†. Some, however, presented spiritual beings, of which the human apprehension could have no experimental knowledge but by divine revelation, and some, scenes of unspeakable glory, which though the mind might be permitted to

* Acts ix. 10. xi. 5. xvi. 10. xviii. 9. 2 Cor. xii. 1—3. See also Matt. xxvii. 19.

† Acts x. 10—16.

contemplate them in miraculous extasy, when doubtful whether in the body or out of the body, yet could not be described in human language, or made intelligible to human conceptions in the ordinary state of corporeal existence *.

* 2 Cor. xii. 1—4.

CHAPTER X.

ON DREAMS SUBSEQUENT TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF CHRISTIANITY, WHICH HAVE NO TITLE TO BE CONSIDERED AS INSPIRED.

Meanwhile those prejudices which mingle themselves with true religion find, as we may say, the means of becoming confounded with it, and of drawing to themselves the respect due only to it. We dare not attack them, from the apprehension of attacking, at the same time, something sacred.—*Cependant ces Préjugés, &c. Fontenelle Hist. de Oracles.*

As there were some original dreams which contributed to the conveyance of divine instruction to mankind, the general notion of inspired dreams was built on experience; though it was afterwards enlarged to comprehend many fictitious accounts fabricated in later times, in imitation of those visions which were furnished in testimony of truth.

It is uncertain at what period preternatural visions ceased to be afforded: those who consider them as having constituted a part of the evidence of Christianity, will suppose them to have ceased with the other documents of a miraculous œconomy; and if they survived the apostolic age, to have terminated with the preternatural gifts of the Spirit, which probably finished when the gospel had been promulgated towards the third, or, at farthest, the fourth century.

Cyprian, who flourished in the third century, pretended to have had divine visions on extraordinary exigencies; as in his Letters to Cæcilius *, he professed thereby to have been instructed to mingle wine with water at the eucharist, in opposition to those who had only water. Tertullian also speaks of visions imparted to others.

* Epist. lxiii.

St. Basil, who lived in the fourth century, endeavoured to discourage the confidence in dreams which prevailed in his time, when probably false pretensions to inspiration were much multiplied. "If," says he, "the visions which appear in sleep concur with the precepts of the Lord, let men be content with the Scriptures, which require no assistance from dreams to produce a just reliance: for if the Lord left his peace with us, and gave us a new commandment, that we should love one another, but dreams induce war and dissension, and extinction of affection, let not men furnish opportunity to the devil of invading their souls in sleep, nor give more weight to their fancies in sleep than to saving doctrines *." And this indeed was agreeable to the instructions of the Son of Sirach, which represented ordinary dreams as calculated only to "lift up fools, since he who so regarded them was like him that catched at a shadow, or followed after

* Basil, Ep. ccx. vol. iii. edit. Par.

the wind * :" at the same time that he distinguished judiciously between those that were given in support of revelation, saying, " Divinations, and soothsayings, and dreams, are vain, and the heart fancieth as a woman's heart in travail; and if they are not sent from the Most High in thy visitation, set not thy heart upon them, for dreams have deceived many, and they have failed that put their trust in them †.

There is a principal consideration which should incline us to the belief, that ordinary dreams do not deserve to be respected as communications of preternatural instruction to mankind, which is, that we are not furnished with any sure principles of confidence, or any standing authority of interpretation: many dreams are indisputably fallacious as to conjectures of

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* Ecclus. xxxiv. 1, 2.

† Ecclus. xxxiv. 5. 7. Divinatio erroris et "auguria mendacia et somnia male fugientium, vanitas" is the strong rendering of the Vulgate.

future events, and we have no mode of discriminating what is to be regarded as false or true; it cannot be supposed that God should require us to be influenced by that which has no stamp of his sanction, and it must be useless to be furnished with the prediction of events, which have no relation to any adequate object, no title to be believed, and of which no prudence can avoid the accomplishment.

When dreams were imparted under the miraculous dispensations of God, those who were favoured with them knew where to apply for their construction, and had the criterion whereby to judge of their fidelity; they were taught to address themselves to the prophets of the Lord, or to the high priest; or to abide by those sacred oracles and general rules of confidence, by which dreams and prophets might alike be tried *.

* Deut. xiii. 3. Jerem. xxiii. 32. Bayley's Essay on Inspiration.

That when indications of God's immediate interference with human concerns were manifested by especial communication, many persons should conceive themselves or others to be objects of divine favour, and instruments of God's views, was natural. To those who were deeply affected by religious impressions, every event was a miracle, every dream a divine vision.

It was natural also, that in times of persecution and peril, the professors of Christianity should often resign themselves to sleep with uneasy reflections, which might generate fearful dreams; and it is therefore not improbable, that Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna, might dream a few days before his martyrdom, that he saw the pillow on which he reclined set on fire and consumed to ashes; a dream which he considered as prophetic of his fate: nor is it improbable, upon similar considerations, that Cyprian should have a dream, which seemed to foreshew the persecution raised by Æmilianus, president of Egypt.

There are few dreams which have been more celebrated than that of Constantine, in which, according to contemporary writers, he was instructed on the night preceding the action of the Milvian bridge, to inscribe the shields of his soldiers with the celestial sign, the sacred monogram of the name of Christ; a form of prayer being likewise communicated to Licinius, which was repeated by the soldiers before the engagement. Gibbon refers the dream to the policy and enthusiasm of the emperor, considering it as similar to the pious frauds of which Philip and Sertorius had availed themselves *.

Tollius, in his preface to Boileau's Translation of Longinus, mentions, without referring to authority, a similar vision of Antigonus, who assured his troops, that he had seen a painting on a symbol of safety, with these words, " In this conquer:" but, as Mr. Gib-

* See Gibbon, chap. xx. Lardner, vol. vii. p. 94. Le Clerc, Bib. Antiq. tom. iii. p. 438. Lactant. De mort. Persecut. chap. xliv. Addison on Medals.

bon has observed, there is ground for doubt, as it is not mentioned by Diodorus, Plutarch, Justin, or Polyænus.

Fulgosius speaks of a dream of Masilienus, who, being sent by the emperor Honorius against Gildo for the recovery of Africa, imagined that he saw St. Ambrose, bishop of Milan, then dead; who, striking the ground thrice with his pastoral staff, thrice exclaimed, "Here and in this place:" and accordingly on the same spot, on the next day, Masilienus easily defeated Gildo.

Many dreams and visions were fabricated to give a colour to the pretensions and views of Mahomet, and his superstition. Cadigha, who received him into her service, and afterwards raised him to a near connection by marriage, is reported to have been prepared for his reception by a dream, in which she beheld the common image of future greatness, the sun, descending from heaven, and entering her

house, diffusing a splendor by which every house in Mecca was enlightened *.

Those who wished to establish and support superstition, naturally pretended to the same testimonies which they had seen successfully displayed in the advancement of true religion. Hence also, in imitation of the divine visions which had contributed to the rise and confirmation of Christianity, prophetic ecstasies and divine illuminations were frequently affected by those whose enthusiasm, or artful designs, interested them in the progress of error and delusion; and the seeds of those impositions were early sown, which afterwards ripened into monastic fraud.

When monkish tales multiplied like heathen fables, St. Bernard's mother dreamed that she had a little white barking dog within her, which, when she communicated to a religious person, he replied, " Thou shalt be the mother of an

* See L. Addison's first State of Mahumedism.

excellent dog indeed; he shall be the hopes of God's house, and shall incessantly bark against the adversaries of it, for he shall be a famous preacher, and shall cure many by his medicinal tongue *."

Many such like dreams are recorded to have signalized the early periods of Christianity. Archbishop Laurence, who built the church of Our Lady at Canterbury, is said, when about to retire into France, under the discouragement of a persecution, to have been warned in a dream, and severely scourged by the apostle St. Peter, for wishing to forsake his flock. On the relation of the dream by the archbishop, and the sight of his stripes, Eadbald was baptized, and became a protector of the Church †.

Nothing was more common in the superstitious ages of the Church, than the contriv-

* Francis Amboco Vit. Bernard. L. i. Heidfield in Sphing. C. 37. p. 893.

† Holinshed, B. viii. C. 24.

ance of dreams connected with the institution of religious establishments, the attainment of dignities, and the discovery of bodies and relics of apostles and martyrs, which might become the objects of lucrative veneration. There are accounts in Fulgosius of the designation of a spot at Terracina for a convent, of the promise of the popedom to Eugenius IV. and Nicolaus V. and of other revelations by dreams, none of which seem to have been of so much importance as that made by the apostle St. Andrew to Peter Pontanus, a simple man, who was instructed by the apostle to find at Antioch the spear which pierced our Saviour's side; in the confidence of which instrument, carried by a bishop, the city, which was besieged by the Persians, and half famished, was extricated from distress, and obtained a victory over Caiban, the Persian general.

Monica, the mother of St. Austin, being distressed with the idea that her son was a Manichean, derived consolation from a dream,

in which she fancied that she stood upon a wooden rule; and that, on being questioned by a young man of glorious appearance concerning the cause of the sorrow with which she was oppressed, she answered, that it was for her son, now hanging on the verge of destruction: upon which she was commanded to take courage, for that she should see her son upon the same rule with herself, as happened by his conversion *.

Another relation, still more curious, is given by Fulgosius, who relates, that Natalis, a martyr, having fallen into the heresy of Theodotion, which represented Jesus as a mere man, and having been, notwithstanding, consecrated a bishop, was, after many fruitless admonitions in sleep, at length severely chastised by an angel; and by this salutary discipline effectually converted to the Catholic faith.

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* Fulgos.

Another tale, equally ridiculous, but more probable, is furnished by the same author, concerning John, an Egyptian monk, who retired into solitude with the resolution to shun all intercourse with women; but being entreated by a Roman tribune to visit his wife, he agreed to appear to her in a dream, as he accordingly did the following night.

The appearance of St. Ambrose to direct the discovery of the bodies of Gervasius and Prolasius, and of Gamaliel, who, in the reign of Honorius, brought to light that of St. Stephen and his sons; in testimony of which a festival, called the Festival of the Discovery of St. Stephen's Body, was established, must be mentioned, and may be classed under the same head.

The dreams which contributed to raise the reputation of saints, "formed to fancy visions and phantoms, and report them," and to impose on the credulity of their votaries, were so numerous and trifling, that it would be a

fruitless waste of time to analyze their distinct character.

In our own country, St. Dunstan was marvellously addicted to dreams and visions, and though they do not appear to have been particularly edifying, they were very profitable to himself; since Holinshed informs us, that "through declaring of his dreams and visions he obtained, in the time of king Edgar, first, the bishopric of Worcester, afterwards of London, and last of all the archbishopric of Canterbury *."

On the other hand, dreams had sometimes a contrary effect; for the same author informs us, that Richard de Havering resigned the archbishopric of Dublin for reflections on a dream, which led him to consider, that he received the revenues of his see, and had suf-

* Holinshed. vol. ii. B. 7. p. 165.

fered his flock to starve for want of preaching*.

We are not to suppose, that spurious visions were peculiar to the Romish Church, since many pious frauds, with respect to dreams, were fabricated and countenanced in superstitious times, even by those who designed to support the reformation of existing abuses. Art was in those cases opposed to art; but it was to the credit of the leading restorers of true religion in this and other countries, that they ridiculed and disclaimed such assistance, and, under the final influence of the reformed faith, "refused profane and old wives' fables, exercising themselves rather unto godliness;" putting to flight dreams, omens, ghosts, and hobgoblins, disenchanting castles, and exorcising, at length, only by reason and true phi-

* Holinshed's Description of Ireland, Ch. 5.

losophy, church-yards, haunted houses, and possessed persons *.

As specimens of the dreams before alluded to, we shall mention some which, both under the Romish and reformed periods, have been fabricated by superstition or imposture.

The night before William II. was killed, a monk dreamed that he saw the king gnaw with his teeth the image of Christ crucified, and that as he was about to bite away the legs of the same image, Christ with his feet spurned him to the ground; that as he lay there issued from his mouth a flame of fire and abundance of smoke. This being related to the king by Robert Fitz-Hammon, he made a jest of it, saying, "This monk would fain have something for his dream: go, give him an hundred shillings, but bid him look that he dream more auspicious dreams

* Hutchinson on Witchcraft, p. 31.

hereafter." Notwithstanding also these and other warnings, he went out to hunt in the New Forest, though somewhat moved. He had stayed in all the forenoon, till an artificer brought him six cross-bow arrows, very strong and sharp, whereof he kept four, and delivered two to Sir Walter Tyrrel, a knight of Normandy, his bow-bearer, saying, "Here, Tyrrel, take your two, for you know how to shoot them to a good purpose." The event is well known; the king was accidentally killed by Sir Walter Tyrrel's arrow *.

Holinshed relates, that Henry Beauclerk, the brother of Rufus, had a warning which contributed to his safety.

Dreams multiplied with the dangers which assailed the Romish power. Pope Innocent IV. is said to have dreamed, that Robert

* Baker's Chronicle, p. 53, 54. Wanley's Wonders, B. iv. C. 52.

Grosthead, bishop of Lincoln, came to him, and with his staff struck him on the side, saying, "*Surge, miser, et veni in judicium,*"—"Rise, wretch, and come to judgment." This dream, indeed, might very probably have occurred, as it was not extraordinary, that the pope's fears must have been alarmed by the contagious principles of hostility which this innovator was propagating in a country so lucrative to the see of Rome. The pope is said to have died a few days after; the agitation occasioned by the dream might possibly have accelerated his death *.

Thomas Aquinas, who is called the Evangelical Doctor, is said to have accustomed himself, by abstract speculation, to fall into ecstacy, becoming to all appearance dead, and gaining the knowledge of abstruse things and mysteries †. This report might have been

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* Simp. Ch. Hist. Cent. 13. p. 449.

† Zuingle Theat. L. iii. p. 223.

framed in reference to the abstracted studies and discoveries of the saint, and believed from regard to his extraordinary character; but notwithstanding the general merit which has been ascribed by his admirers to his writings, we need not the spleen of Luther to dispute their inspiration.

The night before Henry II. of France was slain, his queen is related to have dreamed, that she saw her husband's eye put out, which afterwards happened in a tournament, in which he engaged in spite of the entreaties of his wife, by a splinter from a broken lance of a knight, named Montgomery, which occasioned the death of the king. It is further reported, that a little before this event the king, on hearing a distinguished counsellor, Ann du Bourg, plead in defence of the Protestant religion, and against persecution, with a strong address to himself, was so incensed as to cause him to be apprehended and imprisoned, protesting to him in these words: "These eyes of mine shall see thee burnt." During this time great

feasts were preparing at court for the marriage of the king's daughter and sister. The day being arrived, the king employed the morning in examining the president and other counsellors against Du Bourg, and others charged with the same doctrines, intending to glut his eyes with their execution: but that very afternoon he received the fatal blow in his right eye, which killed him in eleven days *.

This story might possibly be the pious invention of the Huguenots, to intimate God's resentment against persecutors. Bacon, however, informs us, that, when in France, he heard from Dr. Pena, that the queen mother, who was given to curious arts, had caused the king's nativity to be calculated under a feigned name, and laughed at their judgment when informed that he should be killed in a duel, thinking that his station raised him above that danger *.

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* Clark's Martyr.

† Bacon's Works, vol. iii. p. 553.

James V. who wished to discountenance the Reformation, which broke out in Scotland about 1541, denounced persecution against its advocates, and even against his own sons, if they should engage in the cause. Sir James Hamilton, who was suspected of a bias to the party, was falsely accused of preaching against the king's life, and in consequence executed. Soon afterwards the king at Linlithgow saw, in his sleep, Thomas Scott, the justice's clerk, surrounded by devils, lamenting that he had been employed in a persecution which had now subjected him to torment.

It is added, that Scott died on the next day, and that he expired, declaring that he was condemned by God's righteous judgment. James is said to have been disturbed with other dreams, the effect of a guilty conscience *.

* Spotswood's Hist. of the Church of Scotland.

The enthusiastic dreams by which fanatic or designing men have dared to boast of divine revelations, whether for the advancement of political or religious interests, or for the purposes of personal ambition, deserve to be strongly reprobated as impious and shocking. Among the most remarkable persons in the present age, who have laid claim to such inspiration, is Paul Emanuel Swedenburg, whose pretended visions have been employed to support the extravagant effusions of an eccentric and bewildered imagination, betraying the vanities of self-deception, or the vile contrivance of fraud, and serving but to buoy up his foolish followers with delusive conceits, while they violate the precepts and positive ordinances of Christianity.

These prophane follies, after the transient infatuation shall have vanished, which has lifted up some fickle and wayward minds, even in this philosophical country, will be as much forgotten, as are the fantastic inventions, visions, and prophecies, of Dubricius Comenius

and Hotter *, who flourished on the same soil.

There is a great similarity in the measures adopted by fanatical men in every age, and we are, therefore, not surprised to find Wesley maintaining, that his followers experienced remission of sins and conversions in their dreams. "What I have to say," says this canting enthusiast, "touching visions or dreams, is this: I know several persons in whom this great change was wrought in a dream, as during a strong representation to the eye of the mind of Christ, either on the cross, or in history, this is the fact." He afterwards, however, admits, that they are of a doubtful and disputable nature, and might be from God, or might not †.

* Wesley's Journal from Aug. 12, 1738, to Nov. 1, 1739, p. 49, and Warburton's Doctrine of Grace, p. 171, C. 12.

† Ibid. p. 60, 61.

The dreams of Avarice have seldom been productive of much good. A rich man in Wales, having dreamed three nights successively, that there was a chain of gold hidden under the head-stone of a well, named St. Barnard's Well, went to the place, and putting his hand into the hole, it was bitten by an adder *: and, not many years since, as the interesting recluses of Llangollen would testify, a deluded cobler was digging, in consequence of a dream, among the ruins of the castle of Dinas-Brune, which overhangs the vale, in search of gold.

The pride of controversy has produced its dreams: Bradwarden, in his once-famous book De Causâ Dei, tells us of a dream that he had in the night, when writing in confutation of Pelagius. In this dream he fancied, that he was caught into the air, and that Pelagius took hold of and cast him down head-

* Holinshed, vol. ii. Ch. 42.

long; but that, after much struggling, he himself had prevailed, and cast down Pelagius, so that he broke his neck; whereby the controversialist was comforted and encouraged to finish his work *.

Objects of taste and antiquarian research have been promoted, it should seem, by dreams. Mons. Pierre, Counsellor of Parliament of Provence, going from Montpelier to Nismes with James Rancis, is said to have collected from his companion's dreams where he might purchase a Julius Cæsar in gold for four crowns.

The author cannot explain by what prophetic sagacity Lady Seymour dreamed, when a maiden, that she found a nest with nine finches in it, and which is said to have been verified when she married the earl of Win-

* Roscoe's Life of Lorenzo de Medici, vol. ii. p. 253, Ch. 10.

chelsea, whose name was Finch, and by whom she had nine children.

A dream of somewhat similar cast is related to have happened to the mother of the celebrated Sir Thomas More, which I shall give without comment, in the words of Sir Thomas More, who was grandson to the chancellor, and a rigid adherent of the Romish church: "Dr. Clement," says he, quoting seemingly the account from Stapleton, "reporteth from Sir Thomas his own mouth, a vision which she had the next night after her marriage, in which she saw in her sleep, as it were engraven in her wedding ring, the number and favour of all her children she was to have, whereof the face of one was so dark and obscure, that she could not well discern it; and indeed afterwards she suffered of one of her children an untimely delivery; but the face of one of her other she beheld shining most gloriously, whereof no doubt Sir Thomas his fame and sanctity was foreshewed and presignified *.

* Life of Sir Thomas More, p. 55.

CHAPTER XI.

ON OTHER DREAMS RELATED IN MODERN ACCOUNTS.

There are people I know who have so great a regard to every fancy of their own, that they can believe their very dreams.—*Shaftesbury's Moralist.*

THE general theory to which the author is inclined is, that no dreams, excepting those involved with the history of revelation, have any necessary connection with, or can afford any assistance towards discovering the scenes of futurity. At the same time he cannot but confess that there are many accounts supported on great authorities, which militate against this opinion, and that sometimes almost shake his convictions: that he may not appear to decide on partial grounds, and that every one may have an opportunity of judging, he will

proceed to furnish some of the most remarkable dreams in more modern time, which have been thought to have the strongest claims to be regarded as prophetical, and which, as they have had no relation to prevailing systems, cannot be attributed to superstitious imposture, taking them generally in the order of time, and not meaning to attach any particular importance to those which may be first related.

A citizen of Milan being asked for a debt as owing by his dead father, beheld in his sleep, when in trouble thereat, the image of his father, which informed him that the debt was paid in his life-time, and directed him where to find an acknowledgment signed by the creditor, which was produced, and which St. Austin professed to have seen *.

Petrarch is said to have dreamed that a friend, who was dangerously ill, appeared to him, and

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* Fulgos. L. i. C. 5. P. 130.

signified that there was a person at hand who could cure him, and desired Petrarch to recommend him to his attention. A physician soon afterwards entered Petrarch's room, who had come from the sick man in despair of his recovery, but on the intercession of Petrarch returned, and ere long restored the patient *.

This account, probably, took its rise from Petrarch's merely dreaming that a physician might cure his friend, as he accordingly did; and the marvellous arises from the mistatement of the story, which with many other extraordinary relations is collected in Wanley's Wonders, a compilation in which wonderful tales are industriously scraped together, and given with names and apparent authorities which impose on credulity.

" Condivi," says Mr. Roscoe, " relates an extraordinary story respecting Piero, the son

* Fulgos. L. i. C. 5. P. 134.

of Lorenzo de Medici, communicated to him by Michelagnolo, who had, it seems, formed an intimacy with one Cardieri, an Improvisatore, who frequented the house of Piero, and amused his evenings with singing to the lute. Soon after the death of Lorenzo, Cardieri informed Michelagnolo, that Lorenzo had appeared to him habited only in a black and ragged mantle thrown over his naked limbs, and had ordered him to acquaint Piero de Medici that he would in a short time be banished from Florence. Cardieri, who seems judiciously to have feared the resentment of the living more than that of the dead, declined the office; but soon afterwards Lorenzo entering his chamber at midnight awoke him, and reproaching him with his inattention, gave him a violent blow on the cheek. Having communicated the account of this second visit to his friend, who advised him no longer to delay his errand, he sat out for Careggi, where Piero then resided; but meeting him with his attendants about midway between that place and Florence, he there delivered his message to

the great amusement of Piero and his followers; one of whom, Bernardo Divizio, afterwards Cardinal Da Bibbiena, sarcastically asked him, whether if Lorenzo had been desirous of giving information to his son, it was likely he would have preferred such a messenger to a personal communication." The biographer adds with great solemnity, "the vision of Cardieri, or diabolical delusion, or divine prediction, or strong imagination, whatever it might be, was verified*;" but "the awful spectre is now before me," says the author of the Life of Lorenzo, "I see the terrified musician start from his slumbers, his left hand grasps his beloved lyre, whilst with his right thrown over his head he attempts to shroud himself from the looks of Lorenzo, who with a countenance more in sorrow than in anger points out to him his destined mission. To realize this scene, so as to give it interest and effect, would

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* La Vision del Cardieri, &c.

require the glowing imagination, and the animated pencil of a Fuseli *."

On no occasions, however, have dreams been so frequently reported, and so readily received, as those which have been supposed to be connected with impending death, and when God seems still " to open the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction, that he may withdraw man from his purpose, and hide pride from man, keeping back his soul from the pit, and his life from perishing by the sword †." And if upon any occasions supernatural interference is to be admitted, it certainly must be where objects of such moment are concerned.

Alexander the philosopher, who had the reputation of being free from superstition, reports of himself, that sleeping one night at a

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* Roscoe's Life of Lorenzo de Medici, vol. ii. p. 253, C. 10.

† Job xxxiii. 16. 18.

place which was distant a day's journey from the residence of his mother, he beheld the solemnization of her funeral. The dream being mentioned to many, and the time punctually observed, certain intelligence was brought to him on the succeeding day, that at the same hour his dream happened, his mother expired *.

Jovius relates that, A. D. 1523, Sfortia dreamed in a morning slumber, that having fallen into a river he was in great danger of being drowned, and that on calling for assistance to a man of extraordinary stature who was on the further side of the shore, he was by him slighted and neglected. He related the dream to his wife and servants; on the same day seeing a child fall into a river near the castle of Pescara, he leaped into the river with design to save the child, but being overburdened with the weight of his armour, he was choaked in the mud and perished †.

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* Wanley's Wonders, B. 6. C. 8. Was he an ancient or modern?

† Heywood's Hierarch. L. iv. p. 224.

Pope Gregory speaks of a monk who in a dream foresaw his own death, together with that of many other members of his monastery, as likewise that of some sisters of a neighbouring convent: but monasteries were the scenes of fiction.

The Bishop of Lombes, who was the intimate friend of Petrarch, pressed him in the most earnest manner to visit him at Lombes, Petrarch had promised to go the beginning of the year following, and had even formed the project of settling entirely near his amiable friend, when he received the melancholy news that the bishop was dangerously ill at Lombes. This information alarmed him exceedingly: he fluctuated between fear and hope. "One night in my sleep," says Petrarch, "I thought I saw the bishop walking alone, and crossing the stream that watered my garden. I ran to him, and asked him a thousand questions at once. From whence came you? Where are you going so fast? Why are you alone? The bishop replied with a smile, 'Do you recollect

the summer you passed with me on the other side the Garonne? The climate and the manners of Gascony displeased you, and you found the storms of the Pyrennees insupportable. I now think as you did. I am weary of it myself. I have bid adieu to this barbarous country, and am returning to Rome.' He had continued to walk on while he spake these words, and was got to the end of the garden, I attempted to join him, and begged that I might at least be permitted the honour of accompanying him, the bishop gently put me back with his hand, and changing his countenance and the tone of his voice, 'No,' said he, 'you must not come with me at present.' After having said this he looked stedfastly at me, and then it was that I saw on his face all the signs of death. The sudden shock of this sight caused me to cry aloud, and awaked me from my sleep; I marked the day, and related the circumstances to the friends I had at Parma, and wrote an account of it to my other friends in many different places. Five-and-twenty days after this I received the

mournful news that the Bishop of Lombes was dead, and found that he died on the very day that I had seen him in vision in my garden." —"This singular accident," says he to John Andre, "gives me no more faith in dreams than Cicero had, who, as well as myself, had a dream confirmed by the event *."

Henry the third of France is related to have had a dream predictive of his unfortunate fate at St. Cloud, but which does not appear to have been attended with any more use; and Louis of Bourbon, Prince of Condè, who lived in the seventeenth century, is said to have dreamed, that after having gained three successive victories, and defeated his great enemies, he should be mortally wounded, and his dead body laid on theirs; as came to pass, for the Marshal de St. Andrè was killed at Dreux, the Duke of Guise, Francis Lorrain, at Orleans; the constable Montmorency at St. Denys; the

* Mrs. Dobson's Life of Petrarch, vol. i. p. 183.

triumvirate that had sworn the destruction of the prince and his religion; at last he himself was slain at Bassac.

Pere Matthieu tells us that the queen of Henry the Fourth of France waking in the night some little time before the assassination of her husband, in great agitation, the king enquired the cause; she said that she had been dreaming that somebody stabbed him with a knife on the staircase. "Thank God," says the king, "it is only a dream." Henry was so impressed by those and other prognostics which are represented to have foreboded his fate, that he was desirous of postponing the coronation of the queen, and at length consented with reluctance and apprehension to indulge her wishes, and assist at the ceremony; of which an interesting account may be seen in Sully's Memoirs.

Monsieur Cameron relates of Monsieur Calignan, Chancellor of Navarre, that he was warned at Bearn three times by a voice which

addressed him in sleep, admonishing him to leave the town a few days before the plague raged there.

There are many dreams of this description mentioned in the history of our country, some of the principal of which we shall notice.

Holinshed relates that a dream was imparted to Elstric, in which Edmund appeared to fall asleep amidst his courtiers at an entertainment, and which was interpreted by St. Dunstan to have predicted the death of the king *. St. Dunstan himself was favoured with visions upon the same subject.

Alfred, when compelled by the Danes to take refuge in Idlingsay, in the marshes of Somersetshire, fancied, it is stated †, that he saw St. Cuthbert in his sleep, who encouraged him in his despondency with the promise that

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* B. v. C. 24.

† Holinshed, B. vi. C. 14.

he should soon recover his kingdom to the confusion of his enemies, assuring him in testimony of the promise, that some of his fishermen who were employed with their nets, should procure a considerable draught of fish though the river was frozen at the time, both of which events speedily came to pass. The story originated, probably, in some reflections which raised the confidence of Alfred, or was contrived by him, as well as a similar dream attributed to his mother, to enliven his followers.

When Rollo the Dane being defeated by Alfred had left England, his brother in law was admonished by his mother not to engage in his cause, but persisting he was killed*.

It was easy to invent dreams when a religious sanction was required to political designs, as when the lineage of the Kings of England was

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* See Conquest of Ireland, p. 27. C. 42.

in a manner extinct, and the question of the succession much agitated, a person named Brightwold, a man of Glastonbury, afterwards Bishop of Winchester, being much employed on this subject, dreamed that he saw St. Peter consecrate and anoint Edward, son of Egelred, then remaining an exile in Normandy, to be King of England; and on demanding of St. Peter who should succeed Edward, he was directed by the apostle to take no thought of these matters, for the kingdom of England was the peculiar care of God*.

Edgiva, the mother of Adelstan by Edward King of Mercia, was predisposed to surrender herself to the king, by dreaming that a moon ascended from her, which, by its splendour, enlightened all England †. She seems to have been inclined to rival some of the ladies of antiquity who had the same royal presages, and

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* Holinshed, Chron. i.

† Holinshed, vol. ii. B. 6. p. 153.

though of base parentage was, it seems, brought up in the expectation of some great fortune.

The same historian tells us that William Rufus not long before his being killed in the New Forest, dreamed that the veins of his arm were broken, and that the blood issued out in great abundance.

Holinshed also informs us that Henry I. when in Normandy, was "troubled with certaine strange dreams, or visions, in his sleepe, for as he thought he saw a multitude of ploughmen with such tooles as belong to their trade and occupation, and after whom came a sort of souldiers with warlike weapons, and last of all bishops approaching towards him with their crosier staves ready to fall upon him as if they meant to kill him." These were the perturbations of a mind apprehensive of the effect of measures which had probably alienated the affection of his subjects; they are reported by the historian to have affected him, and under the admonition of his friends, to have operated to

his amendment *; and the historian comparing his conduct with that of William Rufus, considers metaphysical dreams as having "a special influence from above nature's reach," and as designed to operate as warnings.

The same author also relates that after the death of the esteemed Earl of Arundel who was executed by order of Richard the Second, the king, as the fame went, was sore vexed in his sleepe with horrible dreames, imagining that he saw this earle appeare unto him threatening him and putting him in horrible fear, as if he had said with the poet to Richard:

"I come the ghost of him thy crimes who knew,
And with my death-like form thy steps pursue †."

With which visions being sore troubled he "cursed the daie that he ever knew the earle ‡."

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* Holinshed's Chron. vol. i. p. 44.

† So Ovid: Nunc quoque factorum, &c.

‡ Holinshed's Chron. vol. ii. p. 492.

The historian informs us that his half-brother, Walter Barrie, being about to undertake a military expedition, was warned, as he supposed, by his mother-in-law then dead, to forbear the journey, but persisting he was killed on the day that he set off*.

Holinshed relates, that the design of an Irishman to murder Hugh de Lacy was defeated by the measures taken in consequence of a dream imparted to one Griffith, and that the traitor was slain †.

The same author reports that a fame had spread that Richard the Third, the night preceding the battle of Bosworth Field, which terminated his reign and his life, "had a dreadfull and terrible dreame, for it seemed to him being asleepe that he did see diverse images like terrible devils which pulled and haled him, not suffering him to take any quiet or rest; the

* Holinshed, C. 42

† Id. vol. ii. C. 40. 41.

which strange vision not only so suddenly struck his heart with fear, but it staffed his head, and troubled his mind with many busy and dreadful imaginations, for incontinent after, his heart being almost damped, he prognosticated before the doubtful chance of the battle to come, not using the alacritie and mirth of mind and countenance as he was accustomed to do, before he came toward the battle; and least that it might be suspected that he was abashed for feare of his enemies, and for that cause looked so piteously, he recited and declared to his familiar friends, in the morning, his wonderful vision and fearful dreame; upon which the historian well observes, but I think this was no dream, but a punction and pricke of his sinful conscience, for the conscience is so much more charged and aggrieved as the offence is greater, and more heinous in degree, (so that King Richard by this reckoning must needs have a wonderful troubled mind, because the deeds that he had done, as they were heinous and unnatural, so did they excite and stirre up extraordinarie notions of trouble and

vexations in his conscience;) which sting of conscience, although it strike not alwaie, yet at the last day of extreme life, it is wont to show and represent to us our faults and offences, and the pains and punishments which hang over our heads for the committing of the same, to the intent that at that instant we for our deserts being penitent and repentant may be compelled, lamenting, and bewailing our sins like forsakers of this world, jocund to depart out of this mischeefe life *."

The night before the arrest and execution of Lord Hastings, who was beheaded by the protector, afterwards Richard the Third, Lord Stanlye sent a trustie messenger unto him at midnight in all the haste, requiring him to rise and ride away with him, for he was disposed utterly no longer to bide, he had so fearful a dreame, in which him thought that a boare with his tushes so rased them by the heads,

* Holinshed, vol. i. p. 755.

that the blood ran about both their shoulders; and forasmuch as the Protector gave the boare for his cognisance, this dreame made so fearful an impression on his heart that he was thoroughly determined no longer to tarie, but had his horse readie if the Lord Hastings would go with him to ride yet so farre the same night, that they should be out of danger per daie. "Ha! good Lord," quoth the Lord Hastings to this messenger, "leaneth my lord thy master so much to such trifles, and hath such faith in dreames which either his own feare fantasieth, or do rise in the night's rest by reason of his daies thoughts. Tell him it is plaine witchcraft to believe in such dreames, which if they were token of things to come, why thinketh he not that we might be as likelie to make them true by our going, if we were caught and brought backe as friends faile fliers, for then had the boare a cause likelie to rase us with his tusks as folke that fled for some falsehood, wherefore either is there perile, or none there is indeed, or if anie be, it is rather in going than biding; and in case we should needs fall in perill one

waie or other, yet had I rather that men should see that it were by other men's falsehood, than thinke it were either by our owne fault, or fainte heart; and, therefore, go to thy master (man) and commend me to him, and praie him be merie and have no feare, for I insure him I am as sure of the man that he woteth of (meaning Catesby, who deceived him, and suggested his removal) as I am of my own hand *."

If we receive the account of Shakespeare derived from ancient chronicles, the Duke of Clarence before his execution

> " Past a miserable night,
> Full of ugly sights of ghastly dreams,"

some of which the poet has described with much power of fancy.

Bishop Jewel is said to have dreamed in Queen Mary's time, that two of his teeth

* Holinshed, vol. i. p. 723.

dropped out; and as he soon afterwards heard of the burning of Ridley and Hooper, the dream was regarded as prophetic of his loss on that sad occasion.

It is related also in the book of Martyrs, that in Queen Mary's time when persecution raged against the Protestants, Mr. Rough, who presided over a congregation which assembled secretly in London, and had the superintendance of the poor, was in possession of a roll containing the names of the congregation. It happened one night that Mr. Cuthbert Simpson dreamed that Mr. Rough was taken, and the roll in his pocket. Falling asleep again he had the same dream, upon which being affected, he rose up with intention to go to Mr. Rough, but before he got ready Mr. Rough came into his room, to whom he told his dream, and desired him to dispose of the catalogue, that it might not be found on him; Rough reproved him for his fancy, but Simpson adjured him in the name of God, as he would answer for the mischief which might

befal the innocent, so that at length he consented; and within two or three days he was taken, and the book rescued.

The compiler of a book of dreams relates, that in the time of the civil wars his grandfather, an officer in the army at Windsor, dreamed that his wife appeared to him saying, "I am no man's wife, but haste to London and take care of your children;" and that in riding to town he received the account of his wife's death.

There are many dreams which must be considered as the *ægri somnia*, the illusions of a disorder which terminates in death, as Crescentinus, the pope's legate at Trent, fancied one night in which he was employed late in writing, that he saw a vast dog with flaming eyes and long ears reaching almost to the ground, and falling sick died raving against the dog *.

* Wanley's Wonders.

That murderers should have dreams when their minds are harassed by guilty fears, is but what might be expected; and if we could be induced to consider dreams as suggested by God for the ordinary purposes of his moral government, it would be where murders have been discovered by dreams.

In Baker's Chronicle it is related that Ann Waters, seduced by a lover, consented to the strangling of her husband, then buried him in a dung-hill in the cow-house. One of the neighbours dreamt that Waters was strangled, and buried in a cow-house; whereupon a search was instituted, and the woman apprehended, confessed, and was burned.

In the year 1553 Nicholas Wotton, Dean of Canterbury, being then ambassador in France, dreamed that his nephew, Thomas Wotton, was inclined to be a party in such a project, that if he was not suddenly prevented, would turn to the loss of his life, and ruin of his family. The night following he dreamed

the same again, and knowing that it had no dependence upon his waking thoughts, much less upon the desires upon his heart, he did then more seriously consider it; and resolved to use so prudent a remedy (by way of prevention) as might introduce no great inconvenience to either party. And to this end he wrote to the queen (Queen Mary) and besought her, that she would cause his nephew, Thomas Wotton, to be sent for out of Kent; and that the lords of her council might interrogate him in some such feigned questions, as might give a colour for his commitment unto a favourable prison, declaring that he would acquaint her majesty with the true reason of his request, when he should next become so happy as to see and speak with her majesty. It was done as the uncle desired, and Mr. Wotton sent to prison. At this time a marriage was concluded betwixt our Queen Mary and Philip King of Spain, which divers persons did not only declare against, but raised forces to oppose; of this number Sir Thomas Wyat, of Boxley Abbey, in Kent) betwixt whose family and

that of the Wottons there had been an ancient and entire friendship) was the principal actor; who having persuaded many of the nobility and gentry (especially of Kent) to side with him; and being defeated and taken prisoner was arraigned, condemned, and lost his life; so did the Duke of Suffolk and divers others, especially many of the gentry of Kent, who were then in several places executed as Wyat's assistants: and of this number, in all probability, had Mr. Wotton been, if he had not been confined; for though he was not ignorant that another man's treason is made his own by concealing it, yet he durst confess to his uncle when he returned into England, and came to visit him in prison, that he had more than an intimation of Wyat's intention, and thought that he should not have actually continued innocent if his uncle had not so happily dreamed him into a prison; out of which place when he was delivered by the same hand that caused his confinement, they both considered dreams more seriously, and then both joined in praising God for it. That God who has himself no

rules either in preventing of evil, or in shewing mercy to those whom of his good pleasure he hath chosen to love *.

The family of Wotton was famous for dreams.

Thomas Wotton, nephew of the celebrated Nicholas Wotton, Dean of Canterbury, and ambassador to France, dreamed in Kent, not long before his death, that the treasury of the University of Oxford had been robbed by some townsmen and poor scholars, five in number. He mentioned it in a postscript to a letter the same day to his son Henry, then at Oxford; and the letter arrived the morning after the robbery, and by means of the communication the persons were detected.

Both Nicolas and Thomas Wotton, who

* Isaac Walton's Life of Sir Henry Wotton.

were men of holy lives, are reported by Walton to have foretold the days of their death *.

Strada relates, that the night preceding the execution of Mary Queen of Scots, when Elisabeth was kept awake by the agitation of her mind, an attendant lady who slept in her room being awakened by a dream, cried out that she saw Mary Stewart beheaded, and soon after her own mistress struck with the same hatchet: upon which Elisabeth, who had been distracted by the same images, being terrified, dispatched an express to Fotheringay to order the execution to be deferred; unhappily for Mary, the messenger did not arrive till four hours after the execution. The dreams were but the natural effects of the cruel resolution which Elisabeth had adopted †.

Sir Francis Bacon tells us in his Natural History, that being at Paris he told several

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* See Isaac Walton's Life of Sir Henry Wotton, p. 20.

† De Bello Belgico, L. ii.

gentlemen there that he dreamed that his father's house in the country was plaistered all over with black and mortar, and two or three days after his father died in London.

Thomas Winter, one of the sanguinary bigots who was concerned in the Gunpowder Plot, on retiring to Staffordshire with the rest of the conspirators, was, with some of his associates, scorched by the explosion of some gunpowder to such a degree, as to be incapable of assisting in the defence of the party when attacked; and upon this occasion is said to have recalled a dream in which a little before he had imagined, that he had seen steeples and churches standing awry, and within these churches strange and unknown figures; and which he represented to have exhibited to him countenances disfigured, like those of Grant, Rockwood, and other of his colleagues*.

* Caulfield's Portraits, p. 111.

The dream was such as was likely to occur to a mind engaged in such a project, and it would have appeared equally verified if the diabolical scheme against the king and parliament had succeeded.

END OF VOL. I.

Law and Gilbert, Printers, St. John's-Square, Clerkenwell.

THE

THEORY OF DREAMS:

IN WHICH

AN INQUIRY

IS MADE INTO

THE POWERS AND FACULTIES

OF THE

HUMAN MIND,

AS THEY ARE ILLUSTRATED IN THE

MOST REMARKABLE DREAMS

RECORDED IN

SACRED AND PROFANE HISTORY.

IN TWO VOLUMES.
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ERRATA.

VOL. II.

— 5, — 11, for *care* read *cure*
— 29, — 2, for *distinction* read *definition*
— 55, — 3, for *stupid* read *steep'd*
— 61, — 11, for *ectrapali* read *ectrapeli*
— 63, — 5, for *to lie* read *to sleep*
— 66, — 7, for *acid* read *acrid*
— 98, note † for *qui somniant* read *quia somniunt*
— 117, — 12, for *sensation* read *sensations*

THE

THEORY

OF

DREAMS, &c.

CHAPTER XII.

FARTHER ACCOUNT OF MODERN DREAMS.

" You will own, 'tis no small pleasure with mankind to make their dreams pass for realities; and that the love of truth is, in earnest, not half so prevalent as this passion for novelty and surprise, joined with a desire of making impression and being admired. However, I am so charitable still as to think, there is more of innocent delusion than voluntary impósture in the world; and that they who have most imposed on mankind, have been happy in a certain faculty of imposing first upon themselves; by which they

have a kind of salve for their consciences, and are so much the more successful, as they can act their part more naturally, and to the life.—*Shaftesbury's Moralists*, p. 211.

Mr. J. Beal, in a letter to Mr. Boyle, dated Yeovill, October 12, 1670, informs him, that when he was a scholar at Eton, the town was infected with the plague, so that the scholars fled away. Upon this occasion, as his father was deceased, his mother at a great distance, and his other relations at court, and he had no address to any other person, the house in which he abode being surrounded by the plague, even at the next doors; the nature and fame of the disease begat in him a great horror. "In this distress," continues he, "I had an impressive dream, consisting of very many particulars. I told it to all the family, and within three days we found every circumstance true, though very strange and seeming casual. I foretold who were sent for me, what coloured horses, and very sore accidents which fell on

them in the way. From that time to this I have regarded some dreams in myself, and others, not without advantage by the premonitions." All this admits of easy explication, and we have only to reflect, that nothing could be more natural, than that a boy, under great distress of mind, should fancy that he was sent for by those who were most likely to be employed, and even imagine the common accidents which eventually happened. The incidents of childhood excite strong impressions; they are magnified on reflection, and are exaggerated on every repetition of the tale.

The relation which Mr. Morrison gives on his travels must be noticed. "While I was at Prague," says he, "having one night sat up late drinking at a feast, the morning sunbeams gleaming in my face in my bed, I dreamed that a shadow passing by told me, that my father was dead: at which awaking all in a sweat, and affected with this dream, I arose and wrote the day, hour, and all circumstances in a paper book, which, with many

other things, I put into a barrel, and sent to England; and being at Nuremburg, a merchant, well acquainted with me and my relations, told me my father died some months past. When I returned into England, four years after, I would not open the barrel, nor look into the book in which I had written this dream, till I called my sisters and other friends to be witnesses; when myself and they were astonished to see my dream answer the very day of my father's death."

The same gentleman saith thus also: " I may lawfully swear, that in my youth at Cambridge I had the like dream of my mother's death; when my brother Henry lying with me, early in the morning I dreamed that my mother passed by with a sad countenance, and told me, that she could not come to my commencement, I being within five months to proceed master of arts, and she having promised at that time to come to Cambridge. When I related this dream to my brother, both of us awaking together in a sweat, he

protested to me that he had dreamed the very same; and when we had not the least knowledge of our mother's sickness; neither in our youthful affections were any whit moved with the strangeness of this dream; yet the next carrier brought us word of our mother's death *."

Dr. Joseph Hall, when Bishop of Exeter, speaking of the good offices which angels do to God's servants, " of this kind," saith he, " was no less than marvellous cure, which at St. Maderinus, in Cornwall, was wrought upon a poor cripple; whereof, besides the attestation of many hundreds of the neighbours, I took a strict and impartial examination in my last visitation. This man, for sixteen years together, was obliged to walk upon his hands, by reason of the sinews of his legs were so contracted; and upon admonitions in his dream

* Morrison's Itinerary. Part I. C. 2. p. 19. and A. B. Annot. on Relig. Medic. p. 294, 295.

to wash in that well, was suddenly so restored to his limbs, that I saw him able to walk and get his own maintenance. I found here was neither art nor collusion. The name of this cripple was John Trebille *."

Some dreams evidently produced their own accomplishment. When Alice, the mother of Archbishop Abbott, was pregnant, she, as was reported by the Rev. Mr. Aubrey, and many others, dreamed, that if she could eat a pike or jack, her son would be a great man. While eagerly employed in getting one, she is said accidentally to have taken up one in some river water that ran near her house at Guilford, and to have seized and devoured it with avidity. The report of this great event being noised about, many persons of distinction offered themselves as sponsors; those who were preferred maintained the future archbishop and

* Bishop Hall's Monitor of Godliness, L. i. § 8. p. 169. Fuller's Worthies, p. 156.

his brother at school, and afterwards at the university. In this there is nothing impossible or difficult to account for, but the accidental taking up of the pike, which was probably a fiction of the good woman, who wished to excite attention to a maternal dream.

Sir Roger L'Estrange is reported, upon what authority is not known to the author, to have dreamed, that on a particular spot, in which he was accustomed to sport in his father's park, he received intelligence of his father's death, who had been long sick. He in consequence resolved to avoid the spot; but being led there by his game, he heard the account which he apprehended.

Among the most remarkable relations of modern times, is the account given by Lord Clarendon, with the solemnity of a grave historian, relating to the assassination of the Duke of Buckingham, as established upon an unusual foundation of credit. It cannot be given better than in the words of the noble

historian: "There was an officer in the king's wardrobe in Windsor Castle, of a good reputation for honesty and discretion, and then about the age of fifty years or more: this man had in his youth been bred in a school in the parish where Sir George Villiers, the father of the duke, lived; and had been much cherished and obliged in that season of his age by the said Sir George, whom afterwards he never saw. About six months before the miserable end of the Duke of Buckingham, about midnight, this man, being in his bed at Windsor, where his office was, and in a very good health, there appeared to him, on the side of his bed, a man of a very venerable aspect, who drew the curtains of his bed, and fixing his eyes upon him, asked him, if he knew him. The poor man, half dead with fear and apprehension, being asked the second time, whether he remembered him? and having in that time called to his memory the presence of Sir George Villiers, and the very cloaths he used to wear, in which, at that time, he seemed to be habited: he answered him, that he thought

him to be that person: he replied, he was in the right, that he was the same; and expected a service from him, which was, that he should go from him to his son the Duke of Buckingham, and tell him, if he did not somewhat to ingratiate himself to the people, or, at least, to abate the extreme malice they had against him, he would be suffered to live but a short time.—After this discourse he disappeared, and the poor man, if he had been at all waking, slept very well till morning, when he believed all this to be a dream, and considered it no otherwise.

"The next night, or shortly after, the same person appeared to him again in the same place, and about the same time of the night, with an aspect a little more severe than before; and asked him, whether he had done as he had required him? and perceiving he had not, gave him very severe reprehensions; told him, he expected more compliance from him; and that if he did not perform his commands, he should enjoy no peace of mind, but

should be always pursued by him.—Upon which he promised him to obey him. But the next morning, waking out of a good sleep, though he was exceedingly perplexed with the lively representation of all particulars to his memory, he was willing still to persuade himself that he had only dreamed; and considered that he was a person at such a distance from the duke, that he knew not how to find any admission to his presence, much less had any hope to be believed in what he should say. So with great trouble and unquietness, he spent some time in thinking what he should do; and in the end resolved to do nothing in the matter.

"The same person appeared to him the third time with a terrible countenance, and bitterly reproaching him for not performing what he had promised to do. The poor man had by this time recovered the courage to tell him, that in truth he had deferred the execution of his commands, upon considering how difficult a thing it would be for him to get any access to the duke, having acquaintance with

no person about him; and if he could obtain admission to him, he should never be able to persuade, that he was sent in such a manner; but he should, at best, be thought to be mad, or to be set on and employed, by his own or the malice of other men to abuse the duke; and so he would be sure to be undone.—The person replied as he had done before, that he should never find rest till he should perform what he required, and therefore he were better to dispatch it: that the access to his son was known to be very easy; and that few men waited long for him; and for the gaining him credit, he would tell him two or three particulars, which he charged him never to mention to any person living, but to the duke himself; and he should no sooner hear them, but he would believe all the rest he should say: and so repeating his threats, he left him.

"In the morning the poor man, more confirmed by the last appearance, made his journey to London, where the court then was. He was very well known to Sir Ralph Freeman, one

of the masters of requests, who had married a lady who was nearly allied to the duke, and was himself well received by him. To him this man went, and though he did not acquaint him with all particulars, he said enough to him to let him see there was somewhat extraordinary in it; and the knowledge he had of the sobriety and discretion of the man, made the more impression on him. He desired, that by his means he might be brought to the duke, to such a place, and in such a manner, as should be thought fit; affirming, that he had much to say to him, and of such a nature as would require much privacy, and some time and patience in the hearing. Sir Ralph promised he would speak first with the duke of him, and then he should understand his pleasure: and accordingly, in the first opportunity, he did inform him of the reputation and honesty of the man, and then what he desired, and of all he knew of the matter. The duke, according to his usual openness and condescension, told him, that he was the next day early to hunt with the king; that his horses

should attend him at Lambeth-bridge, where he would land by five of the clock in the morning; and if the man attended him there at that hour, he would walk and speak with him as long as should be necessary.

Sir Ralph carried the man with him the next morning, and presented him to the duke at his landing, who received him courteously, and walked aside in conference near an hour; none but his own servants being at that hour in that place, and they and Sir Ralph at such a distance, that they could not hear a word, though the duke sometimes spoke, and with great commotion, which Sir Ralph the more easily observed and perceived, because he kept his eyes always fixed upon the duke, having procured the conference, upon somewhat he knew there was of extraordinary. And the man told him, in his return over the water, that when he mentioned those particulars, which were to gain him credit, the substance whereof, he said, he durst not impart to him, he duke's colour changed, and he swore he

could come to that knowlege only by the devil; for that those particulars were known only to himself and to one person more; who, he was sure, would never speak of it.

"The duke pursued his purpose of hunting, but was observed to ride all the morning with great pensiveness, and in deep thoughts, without any delight in the exercise he was upon; and before the morning was spent left the field, and alighted at his mother's lodgings in White-Hall, with whom he was shut up for the space of two or three hours, the noise of their discourse frequently reaching the ears of those who attended in the next rooms: and when the duke left her, his countenance appeared full of trouble, with a mixture of anger, a countenance that was never before observed in him in any conversation with her, towards whom he had a profound reverence. And the countess herself (for though she was married to a private gentleman, Sir Thomas Compton, she had been created Countess of Buckingham shortly after her son had first as-

sumed that title) was, at the duke's leaving her, found overwhelmed in tears, and in the highest agony imaginable. Whatever there was of all this, it is a notorious truth, that when the news of the duke's murder (which happened within a few months after) was brought to his mother, she seemed not in the least degree surprised, but received it as if she had foreseen it; nor did afterwards express such a degree of sorrow as was expected from such a mother for the loss of such a son."

To the truth of an account so fully and circumstantially given, and on such authority, it may be thought an unreasonable attachment to system to refuse assent; and it must be admitted, that if we could suppose departed shades to be allowed to appear, the message which Sir George Villiers is represented to have instructed the officer to deliver to his son, was such as argued a parental solicitude, and was calculated to produce that change in the conduct of the duke which might have averted his impending fate. The author, however, though

he presumes not to reject the account, has only to remark, that it should be remembered, that the death of the Duke of Buckingham was a subject of great national importance. That his distinguished character and influence, and the impressive circumstances under which he was assassinated, rendered it a subject of universal conversation. The imagination of men was set on float, and every one was, doubtless, eager to communicate what might interest attention. The noble historian tells us, that there were many stories scattered abroad at that time, of several prophecies and predictions of the duke's untimely and violent death. Omens of this kind were easily fabricated, and believed, in an age not free from superstition. The affection of relations is disposed to collect and exaggerate every particular connected with the death of those on whom their happiness and prosperity may have depended. It may be considered also, that it is by no means impossible that the dream and message might have been contrived by the countess, with design to produce an impression on the duke,

and a reformation, that might secure him from the effect of the unpopularity to which she saw that he was exposed. She was probably the person mentioned by the duke, as the possessor of the secrets which were disclosed; and the duke's anger might proceed from the suspicion that she had betrayed them. It may be observed, that the name of the officer is not mentioned by Lord Clarendon, though other writers indeed call him Towerson, and others Towse *.

Upon the whole, the author is inclined to consider the dream as the invention of affectionate credulity; as also that of the Countess of Denbigh, the duke's sister, who is reported to have dreamed, that as she passed through a field with her brother in his coach, she heard a sudden shout of the people, and on

* Vid. Peck in Desid. Curios. Nichol's Leicestershire, vol. iii. p. 208, and Gent. Magaz. for Dec. 1801. The arrative was first mentioned in Lilly's Monarchy or No Monarchy,

inquiring the reason, was told that it was for joy that the Duke of Buckingham was sick. She had scarcely related this dream, it is added, to her gentlewoman, than the Bishop of Ely came to inform her of the duke's death.

There is a remarkable relation in Burnet's Account of the Life and Death of John Earl of Rochester. The chaplain, we are told, of the Lady Warre, the mother-in-law of the Earl, had a dream which informed him that on such a day he should die, but being by all the family put out of the belief of it, he had almost forgotten it; untill the evening before the day which had been mentioned, there being at supper thirteen at table, according to a fond conceit that one of them must die, one of the young ladies pointed to him that he was to be the person; he remembering his dream fell into some disorder, and the Lady Warre reproving him for his superstition, he said that he was confident that he was to die before morning, but he being in perfect health it was

not much minded. It was on Saturday night, and he was to preach next day, he went up to his chamber and sat up late, as appeared by the burning of his candle, and he had been preparing his notes for his sermon, but was found dead in his bed the next morning. There can be no doubt that the earl, conversing under very serious sentiments, believed the relation which he gave to its reporter; but it is possible that he might have heard the story from friends more solicitous for his reformation, than for a scrupulous adherence to truth. There is, certainly, some slight appearance of inconsistency in the story; but admitting it to be strictly true, it only seems to furnish one among many instances of the danger of exciting or yielding to superstitious impressions. The chaplain having dreamt that he should die, and been led by the inconsiderate remark of the young lady to be struck a second time with that conviction, probably fell a victim to his terrors. If it were a divine dream, it seems not to have had any adequate object, unless indeed we suppose it to have been designed to awaken

reflection, and a belief in the superior nature of the soul, as we find it contributed to make the Earl of Rochester believe that the soul was a substance distinct from matter.

Lord Lyttelton, the son of the historian, whose ardent imagination might have kindled into terrors when he reflected on his vicious life, is said to have been scared by forebodings which probably occasioned his death; others conceive him to have put an end to his own existence, agreeably to a prediction which he had made.

Mr. Toole, the distinguished comedian, is related to have had a presentiment of his death, which was, probably, nothing but a gloomy fear resulting from ill health, and encreased on the prospect of his departure from England. Such anticipations are but the suggestions of alarm, or the feelings of approaching dissolution. As all men die, and all think on the subject of death with the deepest interest, it is not extraordinary that some should dream

about it at critical periods, and foresee its approach.

Captain Richard Hutten's ship, on the 6th of January 1701, struck on the Caskets near Alderney, and stoved to pieces; the master and six of the men were drowned, and nine men saved. The masts falling upon the rocks, some being on the shrouds fell with it and swung themselves on by part of the other rigging; not having secured any bread they subsisted fourteen days on the ship's dog which they eat raw, and on limpets and weeds that grew on the rocks. They had once sight of the Express, Advice boat, but were not perceived by its crew. About the 18th or 19th one Taskard's son, apprentice of a master of a ship at Lymington, dreamed that he was taking up several men about the Caskets, and told it to his father, but he took no notice of it; but on the 20th set sail in his bark from Guernsey bound for Southampton, and when he came in view of the Caskets, the boy remembering his dream, looked earnestly upon

them, and told his father he saw men upon the Caskets, his father chid and contradicted him; but on the boy's persisting, discovered by his glass one man on the rock waving his cap, upon which he steered and came to anchor on the leeward of the rock, it being a great sea; he took them all into his boat, and brought them safe to Southampton*. The author is not aware upon what authority this is related.

It is related of Dr. Harvey, who was one of the college of physicians, that upon setting off on his travels to Padua, he shewed on his arrival at Dover his pass, but was detained by the governor without any reason being assigned. The packet sailed without him and was lost, and next day the news reached Dover. It is added that the doctor was unknown to the governor, but that the night before the arrival of Dr. Harvey the governor had a perfect vision of him, with warning to stop him as he

* Nocturnal Revels, p. 97.

informed the doctor. The authority upon which this account also is given is not known to the author.

A dissipated person is related to have been converted by the impression of a dream, in which he imagined that he was rescued from a pit in which he was about to sink when sporting with some companions who were revelling with him, and whom he supposed to represent the guilty pleasures which endangered his safety:

> "For pleasure's but a kind of wanton stream
> That carries men to hell as in a dream."

Some of the dreams which have been produced appear to come to us on authorities so respectable, and to have had a tendency so beneficial, that they present certainly some excuse for credulity on this subject. The author would be unwilling to invalidate any impression that might tend to keep alive a sense of God's moral government; he is himself fully convinced of the care and particular pro-

vidence of God watching over individuals, and does not mean to deny the agency and superintendency of angels appointed over every man, an opinion which seems to derive some countenance from our Saviour's words, when he speaks of the angels of children who beheld the face of God in Heaven *. He is aware also that it may possibly be contended that the promise of Joel with respect to dreams and visions, was not expressly restricted to any particular period of the Gospel; but, notwithstanding, he cannot but adhere to the conviction that revelations no longer continue to be imparted by dreams, subscribing to a remark of the great Bacon, that they ought all to be despised, and ought to serve but for winter's talk by the fire-side: "though," continues this great writer, "when I say despised, I mean it as for belief, for otherwise the spreading and publishing them is in no sort to be despised, for they have done much mischief."

* Matt. xviii. 1.

They may, as Mr. Dacier observes, be compared to the stories of an avowed liar which casually may be true; we have, however, no criterion by which to judge whether they may bear any affinity to remote events, and it is reasonable to presume that they do not by any concerted appointment, since God cannot be supposed to have designed to harass us with fruitless premonitions, and to distract our minds with fallacious ambiguities. They may still, however, be understood to be designed for great moral purposes as affording subject for reflection, in a point of view in which they will be considered in some succeeding chapter.

CHAPTER XIII.

GENERAL REFLECTIONS ON SLEEP AND DREAMING, WITH REFERENCE TO SOME REMARKABLE ACCOUNTS.

" Next how soft sleep o'er all spreads thoughtless rest,"
" And frees from anxious care the troubled breast."
Creech's Lucret. B. 4.

In what the author has advanced in the preceding chapters, he has not presumed peremptorily to determine that dreams for great and important purposes may not have been inspired without reference to the evidence of revealed religion.

He has designed, however, to intimate as his opinion, that dreams, in general, are not to be considered as having any necessary connection with futurity, and that certainly no

general ground of confidence in them is established.

Considering then ordinary dreams as the uninspired productions of the human mind, he proceeds to enter into a slight discussion of their general nature, adverting to such causes as may reasonably be assigned for, and calculated to explain them.

In treating of such dreams, it is obvious that he speaks of those representations only which are addressed to the mind, in sleep, in a state of suspension of the corporeal powers; and he regards these as comprehending whatever is the object of our thoughts in sleep, and not merely in the restricted definition of Macrobius, who considers a dream as "that which covers with figures, and veils in mysteries," a signification that can be understood only by interpretation. The dreams of which he speaks result from the exertion of the mental faculties, and include as well those that are of obvious and direct import, as those which are enigma-

tical and figurative; and, in short, every species that does not involve the idea of inspiration.

On a general reflection that dreams take place when the body is inactive and dormant, it may be expedient to examine a little into the nature of sleep, which is one of the most remarkable regulations of Providence, and intimately connected with some of the great arrangements of his appointment, who has "established day and night for a perpetual ordinance;" the latter for sleep, which is well described as "Nature's soft nurse," as that which

> "knits up the ravell'd sleeve of care,
> The birth of each day's life, sore labour's bath,
> Balm of hurt minds, great nature's second course,
> Chief nourisher in life's feast*."

As indeed it is the fostering and gentle so other of human cares and infirmities, the guardian of that repose in which the preservation of the

---

* Macbeth.

human frame is cherished. If sleep be considered in abstract ~~distinction~~ definition, it is certain that notwithstanding the effects which we experience from it in recruited strength and renovated spirits, it is a state of apathy; if considered separately from dreams, it is a suspension of the mental as well as of the corporeal powers*; it is a seeming prelude of death† however salubrious in supporting life, and the senses, though capable of being roused, are closed in insensibility; it appears to loosen the links of connection which subsist between the soul and body without breaking the chain.

> "It is death's counterfeit,
> We seem in it as passing to our former state
> Insensible, and forthwith to dissolve ‡."

---

* Johnson's Dict. fol. ed.

† Ὕπνος δε θανατος τις προμελετεοις πελει·
Ὕπνος δε πασιν εςιν η υγεια βιος.
Diversorum γνωμαι.

‡ Paradise Lost, B. viii. L. 290.

" It is," says Sir Thomas Brown, " a death whereby we live, a middle moderating point between life and death, and so like death, I dare not trust it without my prayers, and an half adieu unto the world, and take my farewell in a colloquy with God. After which I close my eyes in security, content to take my leave of him, and sleep unto the resurrection*."

Thomas Tryon, a student in physick in the last century, defines sleep to be the natural rest of a living creature, or a partial temporary cessation of animal action, and the functions of the external senses, caused immediately by the weakness of the animal faculty proceeding from a steep and stupifying vapour, arising from the concoction and digestion of the alimentary food exhaled from the stomach, and hence ascending to the brain, and watering and bedewing it with unctious fumes, whereby the operation of the senses is for a time obstructed, to the end the powers of the mind

* Religio Medici. B. ii. §. 12.

and body may be recruited, refreshed, and strengthened.

Sleep as it is a state of exemption from impressions from external objects, can occasion no positive sensations of pain or pleasure, unless by the aid of dreams. If during sleep we are safe and tranquil, yet, as insensible of our security, we derive no satisfaction from it.

To enjoy advantages we must be conscious that we possess them, and the only consciousness which we have in sleep is a consciousness of the existence of the ideal objects which our imagination creates in dreams, for when the senses are so strongly affected by external impressions as to produce sensations on the mind, sleep is disturbed, and if no impressions continue we awake.

To the unhappy sleep may indeed be considered as good, inasmuch as it intermits the agonies of pain, and closes the wounds of misery; if it bring no joys, it at least suspends

sorrow, he who mourns even that thankless ingratitude which is " sharper than a serpent's tooth" forgets the anguish of his soul in sleep, which, like the medicated wine of Circe, induces a cessation of sorrow and passion, and a forgetfulness of all evils. The tear is at least for some time checked, the sigh suppressed.

As the will seems to exercise little influence over the powers of the mind or body in sleep, though it occasionally exert a control over them, the character of sleep must take its cast from the nature of the dreams which occur; and in this state of ideal existence the man whose waking thoughts revel in festivity may pine under imaginary distress, while the wretched and depressed may enjoy the cheerful scenes of prosperity. The sovereign whose living brows are encircled with a diadem may see himself " despoiled of the pride of kingly sway" till the early courtiers attend his levee. The embarrassed debtor may be restored to opulence,

and the wretched exile return to the land of his affection.

In general, however, our reflections in sleep are regulated by certain laws of association, and the predominant complection which distinguishes the mind when awake, continues to spread its influence over our waking thoughts.

> " Whatever love of burnished arms obtains,
> Of chariots whirling o'er the dusty plains,
> Whatever care to feed the glossy steeds
> By day prevails, again by night succeeds*."

Or as the idea is expressed by Garth:

> " The slumb'ring chiefs of painted triumphs dream,
> While groves and streams are the soft virgin's theme†."

The " memory retains the colouring of the day‡", which fades only by insensible transitions. In times of prosperity

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* Virgil. B. vi. Quæ gratia currum, &c.

† See Dispensary.

‡ Walpole's Mysterious Mother.

" Glorious dreams stand ready to restore
The pleasing shapes of all we saw before *."

In scenes of sorrow, as Job pathetically complained, the afflictions end not with the day; " when I say my bed shall comfort me, my couch shall ease my complaint, then thou scarest me with dreams, and terrifiest me through visions †;" and Plutarch has expressed a similar sentiment, saying, " when grief takes me sleeping I am disturbed by dreams ‡."

To the coward conscience and guilty reflections, of that murderer of innocent sleep, and of Richard, " the dreadful minister of hell," the night, could bring but perturbation and shadowy terrors, rendering that by which wearied nature was to revive a rude state of

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* Dryden.

† Job vii. 14. 15. So Cicero, Cura oppressi animi vel corporis sive fortunæ, qualis vigilantem fatigaverit talem se ingerit dormienti. De Divin. Lib. i. C. 3.

‡ Plutarch. περι αρετης και κακιας.

disquietude shattering the human frame, while like Rufinus they might see

> " Dire shades illusive fleet before the mind
> Of men by him to cruel death consigned *."

The passions which are ruffled cannot be instantly calmed, and these agitations which impress the mind continue long to fluctuate with an impulse which resembles the dead waves that succeed a storm, subsiding only by slow and imperceptible degrees.

As the tide of our reflections is only changed by a gradual recess after we sink into repose, so the influence of dreams is often felt beyond the period of their continuance; we wake with chearfulness if we have been exhilarated in slumber, and the joy which cometh in the morning requires time to disperse the clouds of solicitude. Sleep, however, though it sometimes admits images to harass the mind, yet

* Claud. in Rufin. L. ii.

in general serves to renew an impaired strength, and to recruit our exhausted spirits; and even when it is most interrupted and disturbed by visionary disquietudes, it still administers to the support of the human constitution. Nature cannot long subsist unless invigorated by its relief, it must collapse or be fretted to an irritation which will drive the sympathetic mind to insanity, if it experience not occasionally its solace and recruiting aid.

The necessity of sleep results from the deficiency of the quantity and mobility of the spirits occasioned by the compressure of the nerves, and by the collapsing of the nervous parts which convey the spirits from their fountain in the common sensory to circulate to all parts of the body*. As this necessity becomes more urgent in proportion to the fatigue of the body, we find that often while it refuses to weigh down the eyelids of royalty

"In the perfumed chambers of the great,
And lull'd with sounds of sweetest melody;

* Haller's Physiolog.

It will

> "Upon the high and giddy mast
> Seal up the ship boy's eyes, and rock his brains,
> In cradle of the rude imperious surge."

Sleep also is justly considered as the world's best medicine, repairing the waste and lulling the disquietudes of nature, carrying off the gross humours of the body by perspiration, and refreshing its debilitated powers. It is so favourable and restorative to nature, that some animals which sleep in the winter, as bears are supposed to do under the snow, grow fat though they are deprived of food; and swallows, bats, and many sorts of insects which enjoy a kind of alternation of sleep extended to a long period, are preserved in that state under circumstances in which they could not exist when awake.

Some writers represent sleep to be subservient to the sustenance of vegetable life, conceiving that the plants which close with the night, and open in the morning, derive benefit from a state of rest analogous to slumber; and

all animated nature may be conceived to require repose, while unceasing vigilance may be regarded as the exclusive attribute of God "who slumbereth not." The quantity of sleep which is sufficient for the purposes of well sustained life varies with the constitution of the individual, and depends on the proportion of fatigue which he endures, and the quantity of nourishment which he receives. It may be protracted indefinitely, and during its continuance the vital flame appears scarcely to waste its supplies; if we may credit some accounts which are furnished to us, and which represent lethargic persons to have been so absorbed in uninterrupted sleep for weeks, and even years, as to require no sustenance, and to suffer so little change or consumption of the animal vigor, that the "eye was not dimmed, nor the natural force abated*."

Diogenes Laertius represents Epimenides, a distinguished philosopher of Crete, to have

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* Bacon.

slept fifty-one years in a cave, during which time if he had any dreams he could not afterwards recall them, and when he awaked he with difficulty recollected the city of his residence, and could scarcely persuade his younger brother to recognise him*. This account may probably be suspected from his connection with Cretan history, the Abbé Barthelemy represents it to import only that Epimenides passed the first years of his youth in solitude and silent meditation. There are many other relations, however, which prove that sleep may be continued without injury to the human constitution certainly to a much longer period than the body could subsist without food in a waking state†. Aristotle and Plutarch‡ speak of the nurse of one Timon who slept two months without any indication of life. Marcus Damascenus re-

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* Diogenes Laertius, Epimen, L. i. Plin. Hist. Nat. L. vii. C. 5. p. 284.

† Introduct. au Voyage de la Grêce. Pausanias, L. i. C. 14. p. 35.

‡ Plutarch. Sympos. L. viii. Quæst. 9.

presents a German rustic to have slept under an hay-rick through a whole autumn and winter, till on the removal of the hay he awoke half dead and utterly distracted *. Crantzius mentions a scholar at Lubeck in the time of Gregory the Eleventh, who slept seven years without any apparent change †. The most memorable account, however, is that of the seven persons of Ephesus, who are reported to have slept providentially in a cave to which they had retired, from the time of the persecution under Decius till the 30th year of Theodosius. The cave, it is said, is still shewn at Ephesus, and the remains of a chapel erected to their memory ‡. These were the seven famous sleepers whose reputation is certainly unrivalled in history. But though the account be sanctioned in some Greek homilies, and in the Koran, many incredulous people have

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* Zuing. Theat. vol. ii. L. 5. p. 415.

† Crantz, Vandal. L. viii. C. 39. and other authorities in Wanley's Wonders.

‡ Ricaut's Hist. of the Greek Church.

stumbled at the marvellous relation, and consider it as a fiction of the martyrologists. There is however perhaps nothing more inexplicable in men's sleeping 196 years* than in their sleeping six, we know not at what limits to stop, and may remark as was once done on the subject of St. Denys's walking a great way without his head, La distance n'y fait rien, c'est le premier pas qui coute.

Upon this subject it may be worth while to notice a very extraordinary account which was drawn up by Mr. Gualtier at the request of the King of Sweden, and which is inserted in the Memoirs of the Academy of Berlin. The case alluded to is that of a woman of the name of Guasser, who was affected by a kind of catalepsy which attacked her twice a day, during which she sunk into a profound sleep, and was deprived of all internal and external sensation, her limbs grew hard and inflexible like stone, a

* Niceph. Hist. Eccles. L. xiv. C. 44. Schol.

little pulse was discernible, and her respiration continued as free as in her natural sleep: she appeared to have no feeling though her flesh was scarified. The fit came on regularly every morning at a very early hour, and ceased about twelve o'clock by a gradual and convulsive recovery of the use of the limbs, which allowed her just time to take refreshments, when she again relapsed into sleep, which continued till eight o'clock, from which time she remained awake till eight o'clock in the morning. It was remarkable that this disorder sometimes lasted six months, sometimes a year, and at last two years and a half (during the latter part of which time the paroxysm returned but once a day) after which period a correspondent interval of health always intervened. During the continuance of her malady she was married, and brought to bed of two or three children, who were not affected by her complaint; she lived many years after the last attack, and having attained the age of eighty, died in 1746, of a disorder which had no apparent connection with this periodical affection, which is supposed

to have originated in some irregularity of constitution encreased by exposure to wet in an endeavour to escape from a persecution in France*.

The case of Colonel Townshend, mentioned by Dr. Cheyne, was also very remarkable; he had for many years been affected with a nephritic complaint, and had the power of dying or expiring when he pleased, and afterward of coming to life again at pleasure, a proof of which Dr. Cheyne, Dr. Baynard, and Mr. Skrine, had at Bath, where after composing himself deliberately on his back, the pulse of the colonel gradually became insensible, no motion of the heart was perceptible, nor any symptom of life to be discerned, a mirror held to his mouth being not even soiled by his breath; he continued in this state near half an hour, and then gradually recovered †.

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* Considerations sur un Sommeil extraordinaire, Mem. de l'Academ. de Berlin.

† Cheyne's English Malad. Wanley's Wonders, Ch. i.

This relation reminds us of the account given by St. Austin of Restitutus, a Presbyter, who could at pleasure deprive himself of all sense in a state of apparent death, in which he seemed not to breathe, and was not affected by any present sensations even from fire, though he professed to hear very loud voices *.

Cardan, the famous physician and astrologer of Pavia, tells us among other extraordinary things of himself, that he could at any time fall into an extasy, and had only a faint and indistinct hearing of those who conversed, becoming insensible of the gout, and every other pain †.

But some reports are still more surprising. A whole people of Lucomoria, a country of

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* August. de Civit. Dei. L. xiv. C. 24.

† Cardan de Varietat. Rer. L. viii. C. 43. p. 103. Scaliger informs us that Cardan abstained from food to verify the prediction which he had uttered of his death, as did also Robert Burton and Bayle.

farther Sarmatia, are related to die on the twenty-seventh of November like swallows, in consequence of the intense cold, and not to awake again till the twenty-fourth of April *.

These wonderful suspensions of the corporeal powers must be considered as more than common trances, such as those by which Barton, the maid of Kent, could absorb her faculties, or than such extasies as Mr. Locke describes to be dreaming with the eyes open †.

The notion of a trance with the eyes open appears very early to have been connected with the idea of divine visions ‡, and it seems in modern times to have been imagined, that the senses of those who are entranced leave the body, and are occupied in acquiring the knowledge of things secret and remote.

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* Wanley's Wonders, C. xxiv. p. 627.

† Essay on the Unders. B. ii. Ch. i, §. 2.

‡ Numb. xxiv. 4.

After the marvellous accounts which have been here produced, it must be an insipid relation to mention that Baker speaks of a William Foxley who fell asleep on Tuesday in Easter week, and could not be awakened even with pinching and burning till the first day of next term, which was full fourteen days*. These relations, it may be incidentally observed, prove the necessity of caution in not burying persons prematurely.

The circumstances under which epileptic persons have been known to think and act as if waking, and even to address other persons in long and connected discourses, are deserving of philosophical investigation.

There are other accounts of an opposite nature equally remarkable. Seneca reports that Mæcenas lived three years without any sleep,

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* Baker's Chron. p. 428.

and was at last cured of his distemper by soft music *.

Nizolius is related to have lived thirty-five years without sleep †.

The modern account of the woman of Padua, who lived fifteen days without sleep, will easily be credited by those who receive the former histories.

It is to be observed, that in these accounts no mention is made of dreams having been enjoyed by the persons thus subjected to the dominion of Morpheus, and it is doubtful whether we are to consider dreams as necessarily attendant on sleep.

Herodotus asserts of the Atlantes, the inhabitants of Mount Atlas, that they neither eat animal food nor dream. Lode professes to

* De Providentiâ.

† Schenk's Observat. L. i. p. 64.

have seen a man who, though his memory was by no means defective, assured him that he had never dreamt till after a fever which affected him about the twenty-fifth or twenty-sixth year of his age; and Plutarch mentions his friend Cleon, who though he had attained a great age, had never dreamed, and says that the same was recorded of Thrasymenes. It is possible, however, that these persons had dreamed, though the impression made on their mind might have been so slight as not to excite any recollection. Aristotle observes, that those who never dream till grown up are generally liable after their experience of this kind to some change of constitution, a remark confirmed by Beattie, who professes to have known a gentleman who never dreamed but when his health was disordered. The habit of dreaming, however, prevails so generally, that it may be considered as an ordinary exercise of the human mind, and its tending to prove its inherent powers of reflection; and it is probable that if the mind is capable of being entirely quiescent, it rarely ceases to think

however its thoughts may sometimes be forgotten as speedily as they arise. Clemens Alexandrinus deemed an entire quiescence to be a death of the soul. Mr. Locke's argument that it is not essential to the soul to think, because it does not always dream *, is founded upon an argument which is at least disputable, for though it may be allowed that the mind cannot think without being sensible that it does think, it need not necessarily be admitted that it does not always dream, because it cannot recal its dreams when awake, or because it does not even remember that it has dreamed; since it might be conscious of its reflections when the body was asleep, though no recollection of them be retained at the return of morning, which instantly presents new scenes to the eyes, and excites new and stronger impressions on the mind. The voluntary operations of the mind seem to cease during sleep,

* Locke's Essay on the Human Understanding, B. ii. C. i. §. 1. Watts's Essays, p. 120. Aristot. de Insomn. Hobbes's Leviathan, B. ii. C. 45.

so that the mind becomes in great measure passive, and we can seldom discern any accurate recollection or powers of reasoning.

"Ebon night is no logician*."

Many things which did occur in sleep, and many things which strike the mind when we are awake, escape almost instantly from the memory, and are not recollected till perchance some remote event recall them to our remembrance: so likewise drunken persons often forget the events and actions which took place during their intoxication; and with respect to dreams, Nebuchadnezzar forgot his dream till Daniel recalled it to his mind†.

Dreams, though sometimes forgotten almost as soon as framed, are not to be considered as useless: they may serve to exercise the faculties and improve the temper of the mind, which

* Mysterious Mother.

† Dan. ii. 5.

may derive profit from the contemplation of successive images, but could receive no advantage from apathy.

Incoherent as they are, they enable us on reconsideration to watch the temper of the mind, to regard its predominant affections, and to note its undisguised propensities; and they who are disposed to correct any mischievous tendencies, may be assisted thereby in discovering where it may be done with most benefit and effect.

Zeno was of opinion, that every one might form a judgment of his advancement in virtue from his dreams, since if he found himself not pleased with any thing disgraceful and unjust, but his powers of mind enlightened by reason, shining out for the reflection of pure images, like a placid and waveless sea, he might have ground for self approbation*; on the other

* Plutarch. Wyttenbach, vol. ii. p. 316.

hand, if in sleep the mind seemed readily to yield itself to vicious passions, there must be much cause for vigilance.

It was upon a similar conviction that Dionysius inflicted the punishment of death on Marsyas, for having dreamt that he had cut the tyrant's throat, being persuaded that it must have formed the subject of his waking thoughts *. When we are awake, as Plutarch has observed, if vice peeps out, it accommodates itself to the opinion of men, and is abashed; and veiling its passions, it does not entirely give up itself to its impulse, but restrains and contends with it, but in sleep flying beyond opinions and laws, and transgressing all modesty and shame, it excites every lust and stirs up its evil propensities, aiming even at the most dreadful crimes, and enjoying illegal things and images which terminate in no pleasure, but promote disorder †. It is observable, however, that

* Plutarch. Dionys.

† Plut. vol. i. p. 398. Edit. Wyttenbach.

when the passions operate to excess in dreams, the mind is affected with a sense of conscious guilt, the influence of which throws a gloom over the waking thoughts; and Plato was of opinion that the mind might be so subjected to the influence of reason, as not even in sleep to be carried away by any vicious desires.

The mind appears to entertain some idea of the length of time that the body has slept, though probably this is from a consideration of circumstances when it awakes, since its estimate does not seem to depend upon the succession of images which it has contemplated; and if sleep is extended to any unusual length of time, no accurate idea of the time elapsed is preserved, as a person who had slept for a week is known to have fancied that he had slept only one night.

CHAPTER XIV.

ON THE NATURE AND EFFICIENT CAUSE OF DREAMS.

The mind enjoys this prerogative and honourable distinction, that it can perform many things by its own powers; but the body can effect nothing but by the impulse and suggestion of the mind.—*Levinus Lemmius de Occult. Nat. Mirac. L. i. C. 12. Hoc tamen prærogativæ, &c.*

As dreams usually obtain when the senses are closed against external objects, they must be considered as the work of the mind, sketches of the fancy, deriving its materials and objects from experience. It is the pre-eminent glory of the mind that it can thus subsist, as it were, in a separate state, independently of the body, which in none of its regular functions, is removed from the superintendance and control of the mind.

It is true, that whatever ideas the mind may enjoy are originally acquired through the senses before they become steep'd in forgetfulness, all of them being formed from the observation of earthly circumstances, and not appearing to be innate. The images, however combined in extravagant pictures, and in whatever manner acquired, are composed of the representations of real objects, and are called up at pleasure by the mind, and if we should admit what Mr. Formey*, after Wolfius, has asserted, that every dream originates in some sensation, yet the independent energies of the mind are sufficiently displayed in the preservation of the successive phantoms, and in the continuance of reflection long after the sensation is excited. The scenes which pass in review before us in sleep are sometimes composed of images which are produced immediately by corporeal impressions, not sufficiently strong to destroy the enchantment of sleep. Beattie speaks of

* Essai en Mem. de l'Academ. de Berlin. Tom. ii. p. 16.

a gentleman in the army, whose imagination was so easily affected in sleep by impressions made on the external senses, that his companions could suggest any thing to it by whispering gently in his ear; and that they once made him go through the whole procedure of a duel till he was wakened by report of a pistol.

Dreams are, however, more often produced by sensation or motion of the brain, excited when we were awake, and continued, agreeably to the opinion of Aristotle, after the removal of the object. Although the powers of the mind are not limited to the contemplation of the image first introduced, but range in the wide scope of their observation to the view of every particular with which they are acquainted, and call up in the concatenation of their reflections, often extending to the most remote and forgotten images long since committed to the memory. Hence it is that we are so little able to trace any affinity between the subjects of our dreams and the sensations of recent

impression. The links which connect the successive ideas of the mind, either waking or sleeping, being in general so imperceptibly fine, as to be traced with difficulty.

Allowing then that dreams are sometimes prompted by immediate or recent sensations, they must in general be considered as the creation of the mind, existing, as it were, in an abstracted state, though still capable of being easily summoned to attention to the body. The sympathy and reciprocal influence which subsist between them are never destroyed, and the mutual interchange of feeling is quickly communicated. There is perhaps never a total insensibility; the moment when vigilance sinks into oblivious indifference can never be accurately marked; no one, at least, hath ever yet noted the moment which precedes sleep. The connexion between mind and body is renewed on the slightest alarm, and unusual impressions are instantly conveyed from one to the other. The hungry body suggests to the sleeping mind

visions of food *. Oppressions from repletion generate fearful dreams, and a disordered limb, if its pain increase, will attract attention. Dugald Stewart observes, that dreams are frequently suggested by bodily sensations, and states, that he had been told by a friend, that having occasion, in consequence of an indisposition, to apply a bottle of hot water to his feet when he went to bed, he dreamed that he was making a journey to the top of Mount Ætna, and that he found the heat of the ground almost insupportable. Another person, having blisters applied to his head, dreamed, in the association of ideas, that he was scalped by a party of Indians †.

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* It may perhaps be said, that when the hungry man dreams, it is rather the effect of the recollection of his waking thoughts. There are still, however, sufficient proofs of sympathy. An ancient writer attributes dreams to the immediate temperament of the body. Hi qui laborant siti cum in soporem venerunt, flumina et fontes videre sibi videntur, et bibere, hoc autem patiuntur aviditate intemperata corporis laborantes. Recog. Clem. L. ii. §. 64.

† Elements of the Philosophy of the human Mind. C. v.

Considering dreams then principally as the production of the mind ruminating on its own stores, we perceive that the imagination is ever in a state of vigilance; that it can paint and recall to its own view those scenes of nature and of life which it hath admired; and though the corporeal eye be closed, yet

> " not the more cease
> To wander where the Muses haunt,
> Clear spring, or shady grove, or sunny hill."

That the mind retains its full and native energies in sleep, its powers of memory, and of reasoning, is evident from the circumstances of somnambules, or sleep-walkers, in which the will directs the body, though in a state of somnolency, often guiding it by an accurate recollection of accustomed circumstances and local particulars, and acting, as it seems, by its own vigour as an ethereal spirit moving a passive machine. It then appears indeed capable of performing some things better than when its attention is diverted by the senses to external objects; it seems left to

its own reflections, and free to apply to its own views. In some of these cases it has been known to solve difficulties better than when awake, as in the instance of the man mentioned by Henricus ab Heeres, of whom it is related, that when young, being a professor of a distinguished university, and engaged in the composition and improvement of verses, he has been known, after being dissatisfied with his labours in the day, to have risen in the night, to have opened his desk, and to have written and composed, reading aloud his production, and applauding himself with satisfaction and laughter, and sometimes calling to his chamber-fellow to join in his commendation: after which he has been observed to arrange his papers and shut up his desk, and then undress and retire to bed, and sleep till the morning, when he retained no recollection of the transaction of the night*."

* Henricus ab Heeres Observat. Medic. L. i. Obs. 2. p. 32, 33. Wanley's Wonders, p. 625.

The same conclusion may be drawn from the relation of Cælius Rhodiginus, who informs us, that when he was twenty-two years of age, being busied in the interpretation of Pliny, while as yet the learned emendations of Hermolaus Barbarus on that excellent author had not performed to him all that was requisite, he was reading that place in the seventh book, which treats of those who grow up beyond the usual proportion which Nature has assigned. The word Ectrapeli, by which such persons were described by the Greeks, was of some trouble to him. He knew that he had read something concerning it, but not being able to recall the author, nor the book in which the word was mentioned, and fearing the imputation of unskilfulness, he retired with uneasiness of mind to sleep, when his thoughts continuing still to employ themselves on the subject, he recollected the book, and even the page which he wanted*.

* Schotts Phys. Curios. L. iii. C. 25. p. 50. Cæl. Rhod. Antiq. Lect. L. xxvii. C. 9. p. 1250. and Wanley's Wonders, Ch. 23.

Persons are very commonly known to walk in their sleep over ridges and parapets, at which Mad Tom would have shuddered. Upon these occasions it appears, that they often act merely from recollection, since they stumble over objects placed in their way. The recollection, however, is often defective, and however circumspectly and steadily the persons may guard against danger in some parts, they often forget where it exists in others. The imagination is also generally so ascendant, that the judgment is not allowed time to act. The eyes of the person are frequently open, but objects which appear before them are usually unheeded, the mind being so absorbed by its own contemplations, as to be inattentive to impressions conveyed by the senses. Sometimes, however, the eyes continue, even in sleep, to present objects to the mind which engage its attention; as in the case of Johannes Oporinus, a printer, who, being employed one night in correcting the copy of a Greek book, fell asleep as he read, and yet ceased not to read till he had finished not less than a whole

page, of which, when he awoke, he retained no recollection *.

The attention of the mind, in this case, appears to have been gradually withdrawn after the body began to act. This disposition to walk and act in sleep is usually considered as a disorder occasioned, according to the opinion of some persons, by a plethora, to which young men are chiefly liable: we may conceive in these cases the turgid and foaming blood to excite sensations which affect the mind: the disorder is understood to be curable by purging the primæ viæ †. Whatever be the remote cause which affects the mind on these occasions, it certainly affords to it an opportunity of displaying its superior powers of in-

* Plater. Observ. L. i. p. 12.

† Levinus Lemnius describes these night-walkers as men of a relaxed habit of body, and great fervour and activity of mind, as chiefly young persons; observing that old persons, in whom the vital powers begin to flag, are incapable of the exertion. De Occult. Nat. Miracc. L. ii. C. 5.

telligence, raised and excited, as it were, by new sensations, and moving the body only as an incumbrance to which it is chained. A similar but less remarkable effect is displayed, when, by an agitation of the spirits, persons are found to talk in their sleep, or to cry out and move, and even to execute their designs by external actions.

There is another faculty of the mind distinct from those hitherto specified, if we may credit a singular relation of Mr. Halley, who declared to the Royal Society, that being carried by a strong impulse to visit St. Helena, in order to make observations on the southern constellations, being then twenty-four years of age, he dreamed, before he undertook the voyage, that he was at sea, sailing towards that place, and saw the prospect of it from the ship in his dream, which exhibited the perfect representation of that island, as it afterwards appeared on his approach. It is possible, that the picture was formed agreeably to the ideas of the island, which his correct mind had formed

from the accounts of others which he might have heard or read. Every one, however, may probably have noticed instances, in which particular scenes appear, or particular events happen, of which a representation may seem before to have taken place in his mind; a circumstance certainly not easy to be explained, but upon the supposition of some presaging power of the mind; but of which the existence and limits are not sufficiently ascertained or defined, to authorize the ascribing of any prophetic intelligence to it, or to imply any design in Providence thereby to direct us, any farther than by such general intimations of the spiritual nature of the mind.

The unpleasant sensations occasioned by the incubus, or night-mare, are either accidental or habitual, and they appear to affect both mind and body. The former is often occasioned by the distension of the stomach with wind or crudities; and it is apt to prevail when people lie on their backs, for then the stomach, being dilated, presses the midriff

and muscles of the breast most, and by that means encumbers the descent of the one and the expansion of the other, which are necessary to respiration, and thus the blood becomes stagnant in the lungs.

The habitual night-mare is supposed to be occasioned by some acrid lymph which disorders the spirits, and creates a paralytic or convulsive disposition of the nerves of the midriff and muscles, which press upon those of the windpipe, and produce the sense of strangling: hypochondriacal and scorbutic persons are particularly liable to these complaints.

It is doubtful, in some instances, whether dreams originate with the mind spontaneously summoning up its own ideas, or with the body prompting some sensation of solicitude. In the case of the existence of disorders in the body, the fearful or oppressive dreams which indicate a disordered habit, need not necessarily be ascribed to the immediate operation of the body on the mind commencing in sleep,

since the mind, sympathetically affected when awake *, may by its own reflections generate gloomy phantoms that scare it when the pains of sensation are suspended.

As for dreams which seem to argue a redundancy of health, it is at least disputable, whether they arise from an ardent imagination operating on the mind, or a full constitution of body, suggesting ideas to the imagination. The connexion which subsists between the mind and the body is so intimate, and their reciprocal influence so immediate, that it is difficult to discriminate the boundaries of their respective operations, and the only consideration of consequence, is the necessity of purifying the affections, and of subjecting the body to rules of temperance and self-command.

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* Per consensum et legem consortii. Levin. Lemn. de Occult. N. Mir. L. i. C. 12.

CHAPTER XV.

ON THE OPERATIONS OF THE MIND IN THE PRODUCTION OF DREAMS.

> And inward spirit works, and the pervading soul,
> Diffus'd o'er ev'ry part, directs with full control.
> *Æneid. Lib. vi. l. 727.—Spiritus intus alit.*

It has sufficiently appeared, it is presumed, in the preceding chapter, that dreams are to be regarded as the work of the mind, however occasionally suggested by attention to the sensations of the body. From the nature and universal prevalency of their impressions, which obtain while the corporeal functions, if not suspended, are bound up in temporary insensibility, so as to intermit the conveyance of ideas, Cicero argues the distinct and immaterial nature of the mind, and they certainly

demonstrate, as Virgil has expressed it with emphatical, if not peculiar reference to the human mind,

> " Its heav'nly spirit and celestial birth,
> However clouded by the mists of earth;
> Its force which, though confin'd by mark and chains,
> The body's perishable limbs disdains *."

For as the body is then inert, and not alive to ordinary perceptions, or capable of being rendered serviceable without the dispersion of sleep; the continued activity of the mind, during the lethargy, is a just argument of its separate and independent existence; of its capacity of thought in an abstracted state; of its energy, which requires neither intermission nor rest.

It may perhaps be urged as an argument against the presumed proof of the spiritual

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* Igneus est equidem vigor et cælestis origo. Æneid. Lib. vi. l. 730.

nature of the mind, that brute animals appear to dream, though we do not ascribe to them an immaterial soul.

Lucretius, embarrassed with the proofs in favour of the immortality of the soul, poetically urges this argument:

" Not man alone, but animals display
The same remembrance of the scenes of day.
In sleep the courser sweats with swelling veins,
And shortly breathing o'er the course he strains;
And ev'ry barrier down with eager speed,
Strives 'gainst contending rivals for the meed.
So hounds in sleep their quiv'ring limbs will try,
And give with sudden yelp their feeble cry;
With frequent inspiration air inhale,
As if they touch'd upon the scented gale:
Half-rous'd with eager wildness they pursue
Th' ideal stag, swift flying in their view,
Till to their sight th' illusive vision fail,
And real objects o'er the false prevail:
E'en those of gentler breed, who seldom roam,
Whose guardian office is to watch at home,
Shake off light slumbers oft with hasty bound,
As if a stranger seen, or heard a sound,
Each creature as its nature's fierce or tame,
When seen awake, in sleep appears the same.

E'en birds awaken'd in a sudden fright
Fly to securer groves, if chance by night
The visionary hawk should hov'ring seem
To soar and threaten mischief in a dream."

There is, it must be confessed, some force in this objection, and a parity of reasoning may seem to compel us to allow the existence of an immaterial nature in animals, as far, at least, as the proof is to rest on the power of dreaming, exclusive of other arguments; and notwithstanding, indeed, the spirit of the beast is said in Scripture to go downward to the earth, we may conceive it to be endowed with powers of reflection, and to be capable of being impressed by ideas, and therefore of a constitution which, though manifestly inferior to the human mind, and, it is presumed, not destined to immortality, may be considered as distinct from a material substance, no organization of which we can conceive to be capable of thought*.

* Nam si quid in illis rationis similitudinem imitatur, non ratio, sed memoria est, et memoria non illa ratione mixta, sed quæ hebitudinem sensuum quinque comitatur. Macrob. in Somn. Scipio—L. i. c. 14. See also Locke.

There is a relation of St. Austin, in a letter to Euodius, which prettily illustrates the argument of the immateriality of the mind to be drawn from its distinct operations. Genadius, we are told, a Carthaginian physician, who doubted of the immortality of the soul, saw in his sleep a youth, who shewed to him a beautiful city, and who, returning on the succeeding night, inquired of Genadius whether he recollected him. Genadius answered that he did, and remembered his dream. The youth then asked him what he was then about: the physician replied, that he was in his bed sleeping. The apparition left him to reflect with salutary conviction, that as his mind then beheld a city, though his eyes were closed in sleep, and his body lay dormant, so the spirit of man might continue to live and exercise its powers of observation and intelligence, though the body should lie lifeless in the tomb *.

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* See Fulgosius.

It is an idea to which we have before adverted, that those faculties of the mind often display themselves with greater energy when the body is sepulchred in sleep, and when the spirit is as it were released from "the earthly tabernacle which weigheth down the mind that museth on many things*."—They seem to expatiate with uncontrolled freedom, to unfold new powers of intelligence and fancy, to range with sudden and excursive flights, in which the horizon of the prospect is varied and enlarged, and the scattered scenes of memory collected into one point of view; objects are grouped with rapid observation, our action seems uncircumscribed, and we glide in visionary celerity from scene to scene with the imperceptible flight of the eagle soaring through the trackless air, and moving as the heathen deities are represented, or as Adam describes himself,

"Smooth sliding without step†."

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* Wisdom ix. 15.

† Paradise Lost, B. viii. l. 302.

or like Shakespear, when

> "Existence saw him spurn her bounded reign,
> And panting Time toil'd after him in vain *."

It may perhaps be argued, that whatever excellency of thought and reflection is displayed by the mind in sleep, it is the excellency of the lesser faculties, not of reason, but of those that "serve reason as chief," of mimic Fancy, which but wakes to imitate reason, and which

> "Joining or misjoining shapes,
> Wild work produces oft, and most in dreams;
> Ill matching words and deeds long past, or late †."

And Mr. Locke indeed represents dreams as not under the rule and conduct of the understanding; but it may still be maintained, that however the fancy may appear to predominate over the judgment, and however the mind may

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* Johnson.

† Parad. Lost, B. v. L. 100. 110.

be deluded into a belief of the reality of those fictitious scenes which it forms, when it

> " With inward apprehension gently moves
> Our fancy to believe we yet have being,
> And live * ;"

yet that the superior powers of the mind are often exercised in sleep with considerable effect, and its faculties of discrimination and judgment manifested in a chain of reasoning. Much of incongruity, which is supposed to prove the suspension of reason, and much of the wild discordancy of representation which appears to prevail, may arise from the defect of memory when we awake, that does not retain the impression of images which have passed across the mind in light and rapid succession; and which, therefore, exhibit but a partial and imperfect sketch of the picture that engaged the attention in sleep.

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* Parad. Lost.

We have produced, in a preceding chapter, some relations which demonstrate the exertion of the higher powers of intellect in sleep. Sir Thomas Browne was of opinion, that we are somewhat more than ourselves in sleep, and that the slumbers of the body seem to be but the waking of the soul; the ligation of sense, but the liberty of reason; and that our waking conceptions do not match the fancies of our sleep. "At my nativity," says he, "my ascendant was the watery sign of Scorpius; I was born in the planetary hour of Saturn, and I think I have a piece of that leaden planet in me. I am no way facetious, nor disposed for the mirth and galliardise of company; yet in one dream I can compose a whole comedy, behold the action, apprehend the jests, and laugh myself awake at the conceits thereof: were my memory as faithful as my reason is then fruitful, I would never study but in my dreams; and this time also would I chuse for my devotions: but our grosser memories have then so little hold of our abstracted understandings, that they forget

the story, and can only relate to our awaked souls a confused and broken tale of that that hath passed *."

Allowing what we please for the elaborate extravagancies of this learned and ingenious writer, there is still much truth in his remarks; and it is certain, that the mind exhibits great and extraordinary powers in sleep, and we may collect very striking proofs of the superiority of the human intellect working amidst the confusion of its dreams. We note the ability of the mind to withdraw itself from attention to the body to the contemplation of its own images, its comprehension of every thing within the sphere of its observation, the vivid and unexpected recovery of the past, and its bold and probable conjecture of the future; we perceive in it a spirit that only needs to be roused, a vigour which, to apply the illustration of Lactantius, requires only, as fire strewed

* Religio Medici, P. ii. §. 11.

over and covered with ashes, to be slightly moved to break forth; we may almost say,

> The Deity within us stirs, and we maintain
> An intercourse with those in heav'n who reign *.

The mind has certainly been deemed capable of impressions of revealed knowledge when the body has been asleep; but though we should be disposed to admit any superiority in its powers of apprehension or exertion in its abstracted state, and allow, that in proportion as it withdraws from the body it exhibits proofs of its elevated nature, we do not conceive that its faculties, unaided by inspiration, can make any discoveries beyond the limits of experience. It may combine objects with every variety of representation, and it may outstrip the rapidity of time; but if it pass the bounds of present observation, it will be only to wander among scenes framed by the combination of earthly objects, however diversified by

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* Est Deus in nobis, &c. *Virgil.*

fancy, or spiritualized by abstraction *. The general picture will be formed of corporeal images, though joined perhaps in the unnatural grouping, or composed in the fantastic imagery which Horace represents of the horse's neck joined to the human head, and of the limbs feathered with various plumage. If the mind dream of heaven, it will people it with earthly objects; its angels will no more resemble celestial ministers, than those which the imagination figures to itself in its waking dreams, or than poetry and painting have portrayed. It may be concluded therefore, that whatever excellencies the mind displays, it does not appear to be endowed with prophetic powers; though from the infinite diversity of

* The mind can have no ideas but what it has acquired by the senses. Mr. Bew, however, in his Essay on Blindness, published in the first volume of the Manchester Memoirs, professes to have gained sufficient information to convince him, that the blind feel impressions in dreaming similar to the visible appearances of bodies—as similar, we may suppose, as scarlet to the sound of a trumpet.

circumstances which crowd into the field of its observation, and from the incalculable variety of scenes which are combined, it is impossible that it should not sometimes dream of events which have an analogy, or resemblance to circumstances, that afterwards come to pass.

It is natural to suppose, that there must be occasional correspondences discovered between the particulars that occur in the endless variety of human dreams, and in the infinite diversity of human events: dreams are composed of reflections formed from experience in life, the course of which is, in many respects, uniform; and these are circumstances which daily recur.

It has been before observed, likewise, that the particulars which pass in review before us in dreams are often forgotten, and recalled only when some similitude of event revives them. As not accurately remembered, their indistinct images are more readily accommodated to subsequent circumstances, and are often conceived to bear a reference which does

not exist. Divine dreams, which were really subservient to revelation, laid the foundation of a confidence which was afterwards extended to false pretensions. There is a general disposition to a superstitious apprehension of futurity, and a general propensity to magnify trivial incidents into marvellous events. The accounts which most surprise and stagger us are not sufficient in number or clearness to authorize the supposition of preternatural interference, while many others must be rejected as "pleasant tales *:" as proofs of that love of the marvellous which overlooks simple solutions, and seeks for miracles, which neglecting

"That which is before its feet, gazes on the stars †."

It is certain, that the knowledge of futurity would by no means be conducive to human

* Ο μυθοι καλοι αξιοι ακουσαι.

† Quid ante pedes nemo spectat, cœli spectatur plagas.
Σπευδαζομεν πολλα υπ' ελπιδων ματην ποσους εχοντες.
Euripides.

happiness, if it could be obtained: it would not advance either the improvement or the present interests of man. Horace has well observed, that

> "The prudent God hath veiled in darkest night
> The future scene from ev'ry mortal sight;
> And laughs when men, with over-anxious fears,
> Anticipate the woes of future years."

And there are considerations, indeed, to demonstrate the wisdom of the appointment, of which the heathen moralists were not aware; for if it were otherwise, our existence would be regarded not as an uncertain period of probation, but as a defined possession, in which amendment would be posponed, and repentance procrastinated; our dependance on the Supreme Being would be forgotten: there would be confidence without fear, a reliance without gratitude or piety. The animation of hope, the pleasure of surprise, would be lost. The knowledge of approaching good would but deaden the enjoyment of possession; the dread of approaching evil would be fearful

and intolerable. What, says Cicero, would have been the fate of Priam, if he had foreseen the impending destruction of his family?

> " O visions ill foreseen, better hid he
> Liv'd ignorant of future, so had borne
> His part of evil only."

> " Let no man seek
> Henceforth to be foretold what shall befall
> Him or his children; evil he may be sure,
> Which neither his foreknowing can prevent;
> And he the future evil shall no less
> In apprehension than in substance feel
> Grievous to bear *."

Who would wish to behold his descendants, as Virgil represents Æneas to have seen Marcellus,

> " In youth encircled with the shades of death."

How much would the inducement to cultivate the good qualities and excellencies of those in whom we now feel interested be diminished,

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* Paradise Lost, B. xi.

especially among such as look not to the eternal fruits of virtue, if we were conscious that premature death would deprive us soon of the society of the objects of our care, and bury their virtues in an early grave: who would labour for distinction, of which the effect must finish on the morrow? What fortitude could contemplate the shade advancing on the dial of time, if the line were ascertained at which death would execute its decree?

Many writers, who have thought that they have observed proofs of a prophetic discernment of the mind, have maintained, that it displays an especial insight as it approaches the goal of its delivery *. Cicero considers its presaging powers as expressive of a divine nature, and of the excellent faculties which it will display in a future state †.

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* Xenophon. Hist. L. viii.

† Cicero de Senec'.

These opinions are consistent with the current persuasions of antiquity, of which the poets and historians afford many proofs; as for instance Homer, in describing the death of Patroclus; Virgil, that of Turnus; Cicero, that of Possidonius *: and Sir Thomas Browne has observed, that men sometimes, upon the hours of their departure, do speak and reason above themselves; for then the soul, about to be freed from the ligament of the body, begins to reason like herself, and to discourse in a strain above mortality †." This, however, is nothing but the elation of the mind, to which earthly things begin to fade, and the hope and expectation of immortality to brighten: no real foreknowledge obtains, excepting as founded on conjectural reasonings from experience; nor are there any well-established accounts of such,

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* Naudæus in Bib. Casaubon Enthus. C. ii. p. 59. Boyle's Works, vol. v. p. 496.

† Religio Medici, B. ii. §. 11.

excepting in the instances mentioned in sacred history *.

"The mind of man is ignorant of fate †."

We may conclude therefore, in general deduction, from the considerations which have been stated, first, that the mind had no existence previously to its entrance into the body; since, in its most abstracted speculations, it exhibits no acquaintance with any ideas that are not acquired by the senses on earth: and secondly, that it is immaterial, and capable of independent exertions, though it sympathizes with the body in its affections, when the latter is either sleeping or waking, and is pained by its sufferings, and enlivened by its vigour. It appears also that it developes powers and faculties of a spiritual nature; and that its perfections are sometimes manifested with equal, if not greater vivacity, when it is freed from the oppressive influence of the body; and that it

* Gen. xlviii. † Virgil.

has, in that state, been judged by God capable of receiving divine revelations. It appears likewise, that some faint notices have been discerned in it occasionally of an intuitive and prophetical discernment, though it is not naturally endowed with prophetic powers, capable of affording any light for the direction of the conduct of men.

CHAPTER XVI.

Wherefore, O Ruler of the World, impart
This heightened sorrow to the human heart;
Through fearful omens led by thy decree,
Impending griefs and slaughter to foresee *.

It has been an opinion countenanced in the preceding chapters, that the human mind is not naturally endowed with any power of foreknowing or presaging future events, however it may occasionally have been inspired with prophetic apprehensions by the immediate impulse of God's Spirit. It may be proper, therefore, to consider now what may be alledged in favour of the second sight, which has often been maintained to prevail in the Highlands of Scotland, as this inquiry is intimately connected

* Lucan's Pharsalia, L. ii.

with the subject of our present discussion; and since if it can be admitted that such faculty does really exist, it may be judged unreasonable to dispute the existence also of a prophetic power of the mind operating in dreams.

That full scope may be allowed for the examination of this subject, I shall set down the result of the inquiries which were made by Dr. Johnson in his celebrated Tour with Mr. Boswell to the Highlands, accompanied with his reflections which are philosophical and just, and which it would be an injury to give in any other words than his own.

"The second sight," says this great writer, "is an impression made either by the mind upon the eye, or by the eye upon the mind, by which things distant or future are perceived, and seen as if they were present; a man on a journey far from home falls from his horse, another who is perhaps at work about the house sees him bleeding on the ground, commonly with a landscape of the place where the

accident befalls him; another seer driving home his cattle, or wandering in idleness, or musing in the sunshine, is suddenly surprised by the appearance of a bridal ceremony, or funeral procession, and counts the mourners or attendants, of whom, if he knows them, he relates the names, if he knows them not, he can describe the dresses. Things distant are seen at the instant when they happen, of things future I know not that there is any rule for determining the time between the sight and the event.

"This receptive faculty, for power it cannot be called, is neither voluntary nor constant, the appearances have no dependance upon choice, they cannot be summoned, detained, or recalled, the impression is sudden, and the effect often painful.

"By the term second sight seems to be meant a mode of seeing superadded to that which nature generally bestows.

"I do not find it to be true, as it is reported, that to the second sight nothing is presented but phantoms of evil; good seems to have the same proportion in these visionary scenes, as it obtains in real life. Almost all remarkable events have evil for their basis, and are either miseries incurred, or miseries escaped. Our sense is so much stronger of what we suffer, than of what we enjoy, that the ideas of pain predominate in almost every mind. What is recollection but a revival of vexations, is history but a record of wars, treasons, and calamities? Death, which is considered as the greatest evil, happens to all, the greatest good be it what it will is the lot but of a part.

"That they should often see death is to be expected, because death is an event frequent and important, but they see likewise more pleasing incidents. A gentleman told me that when he had once gone far from his own island, one of his labouring servants predicted his return, and described the livery of his attendant which he had never worn at home,

and which had been without any previous design occasionally given him.

" It is the common talk of the Lowland Scots, that the notion of the second sight is wearing away with other superstitions, and that its reality is no longer supposed but by the grossest people. How far its prevalence was extended, or what ground it has lost, I know not. The islanders of all degrees, whether of rank or understanding, universally admit it, except the ministers, who universally deny it in consequence of a system against conviction: one of them honestly told me that he came to Sky with a resolution not to believe it.

" Strong reasons for incredulity will readily occur: this faculty of seeing things out of sight is local and commonly useless, it is a breach of the common order of things, without any visible reason, or perceptible benefit; it is ascribed only to a people very little enlightened, and among them, for the most part, to the mean and ignorant.

" To the confidence of these objections it may be replied, that by presuming to determine what is fit and what is beneficial, they presuppose more knowledge of the universal system than man has attained; and, therefore, depend upon principles too complicated and extensive for our comprehension, and that there can be no security in the consequence when the premises are not understood; that the second sight is only wonderful because it is rare, for considered in itself, it involves no more difficulty than dreams, or perhaps than the regular exercise of the cogitative faculty; that a general opinion of communicative impulses, or visionary representations, has prevailed in all ages and all nations; that particular instances have been given with such evidence as neither Bacon nor Boyle has been able to resist; that sudden impressions, which the event has verified, have been felt by more than own or publish them; that the second sight of the Hebrides implies only the local frequency of a power which is no where totally unknown, and that where we are unable to decide by antecedent reason, we

must be content to yield to the force of testimony.

" By pretension to second sight no profit was ever sought or gained, it is an involuntary affection in which neither hope nor fear are known to have any part, those who profess to feel it do not boast of it as a privilege, nor are considered by others as advantageously distinguished; they have no temptation to feign, and their hearers have no motive to encourage the imposture.

" To talk with any of these seers is not easy, there is one living in Sky with whom we would gladly have conversed, but he was very gross and ignorant, and knew no English. The proportion in these countries of the poor to the rich is such, that if we suppose the quality to be accidental, it can very rarely happen to a man of education, and yet on such men it has sometimes fallen. There is now a second sighted gentleman in the High-

lands, who complains of the terrors to which he is exposed.

"The foresight of the seers is not always prescience, they are impressed with presages of which the event only shews them the meaning, they tell what they have seen to others who are at that time not more knowing than themselves, but may become at last very adequate witnesses by comparing the narrative with its verification.

"To collect sufficient testimonies for the satisfaction of the public or of ourselves, would have required more time than we could bestow. There is against it the seeming analogy of things confusedly seen and little understood, and for it the indistinct cry of national persuasion, which may be perhaps resolved at last into prejudice and tradition. I never could advance my curiosity to conviction, but came away at last only willing to believe *."

* Johnson's Journey to the Western Islands, Murphy's edit. vol. viii. p. 343—347.

From this account no satisfactory conclusion can, I think, be drawn subversive of the opinion maintained in these disquisitions, that the human mind is not naturally endowed with any prophetic powers.

It is possible, indeed, that it may experience gloomy presages which are the result of the conviction of the uncertainty of human affairs, or the effect of apprehension and moral feelings. The faculty claimed in the Highlands is peculiar to countries where knowledge and true philosophy have not yet diffused their full light, nor religion put to flight these gloomy superstitions which are apt to linger in retired and secluded scenes, amidst vallies soon overspread with the shades of evening, and where the vapory mists float incessantly on "the mountains' brow."

CHAPTER XVII.

ON THE RECURRENCE OF THOSE REFLECTIONS IN SLEEP, WHICH HAVE ENGAGED OUR ATTENTION WHEN AWAKE.

"And the same image still returns."
Eademque recurrit imago.

DIVERSE as are the circumstances, and varied as is the character of our dreams, and difficult as it sometimes is to trace their connection with preceding reflections and events, it appears that, in general, they take their complection from particulars of a recent occurrence, and are tinctured by the colouring of our thoughts before we close our eyes in forgetfulness, however the shades may gradually change, and insensibly assume a different hue.

This connection between our waking and sleeping thoughts was noted by Solomon, who observes " that a dream * cometh through the multitude of business," and it is alluded to with poetical illustration by Lucretius in the following lines:

" The scenes on which our thoughts have chiefly dwelt;
The pain and pleasures which we oft have felt;
Whate'er pursuits employ us when awake,
Possession of our minds in sleep will take.
Statutes and laws the lawyers still engage,
Contending chieftains furious battles wage,
And sailors struggle with the tempest's rage.
I Nature's principles explore, and seek
Establish'd truths in native strains to teach.

* The Hebrew word חלם חלומ, a dream, according to Parkhurst, implies broken parts or fragments being composed of ideas or images received by our senses, particularly by our sight, while awake; it is, indeed, often applied to supernatural dreams, which, like natural dreams, consisted of broken and familiar images, as in Gen. xxxvii. xl. xli. Daniel ii. vii. Other lexicographers, however, derive the word חלם, valuit, qui sani somniant, and suppose it to denote the temperament of the constitution.

And other arts illusively beguile
The mind in sleep with fascinating smile:
Those who on idle sports consume the hours
Which pleasure varies with its changing powers;
Where transient objects to the mind convey'd,
In quick succession speedily must fade;
Still though the scene be closed, in dreams descry
Traces of all that has amused the eye.
Oft do the images recur. In graceful form
Some the soft movements of the dance perform,
While liquid measures float upon the ears,
And the whole splendid theatre appears.
With such a strong dominion custom reigns,
So pleasure binds the mind in silken chains;
Those whose great souls with lofty projects teem,
Renew these projects nightly as they dream.
Monarchs attack, are taken, seem to feel,
Or shrink affrighted from the threatening steel;
Some, as they bleed, their hapless fate bemoan,
And midst the battle's shouts unheeded groan;
Some as if torn by furious panthers cry,
Some seem beneath the lion's rage to lie *."

Ovid avails himself of this renewal of the sensations which engage our waking thoughts, in the following pathetic lines, in which he

* Lucretius, B. iv. Et quos quisque.

vented his sorrows when in exile among the Sarmatians.

" When rest and sleep their medicine prepare,
Vainly I hope the night devoid of care;
Then dreams which copy real woes revive
My grief, and every sense to sorrow is alive.
I seem to shrink from the Sarmatian spears,
Or raise my hands to chains with captive tears;
Or soothed to happier scenes my mind regains
My long deserted seat and native plains;
With you, my friends, sweet converse I maintain,
Or thee, beloved, to my bosom strain."

The learned and engaging Sir Henry Wotton in a survey of education, speaking of a child, says, " Let not his very dreams be neglected, for without question there is a great analogy between these apprehensions which he hath taken by day into his fancy, and the nocturnal impressions, particularly in that age which is not yet troubled with the fumes and cares of the world, so as the soul hath a freer and more defecated operation*."

* See Reliquiæ Wottonianæ.

This recurrence of images which have previously engaged the mind, is also neatly expressed by Claudian.

" Whate'er by day our contemplation views,
Sweet sleep's reflection in the night renews;
Scarce on his bed the wearied sportsman lies,
Than back into the woods his fancy flies.
In dreams the judge decrees, the charioteer
Guides round the goal his courser's swift career,
Softly the lover treads. The merchant deals,
The miser starting for his treasure feels.
Sleep to the thirsty land, in fruitless dreams,
Draws from ideal springs refreshing streams;
Me too the Muses, in the silent night
With arts seductive, to their haunts invite *."

The connection between our waking and our sleeping thoughts appears from the curious circumstance of our dreaming often that we do dream, which results from the conviction that we have before been deceived.

* Omnia quæ sensu, &c. Claud. pref. iii.

It is remarkable that the mind when we dream is the theatre of action, and at the same time the agent, the whole mimic scene is a fictitious world collected in the mind, in which objects and persons, as actors and spectators, are multiplied with endless fertility of imagination. St. Basil represents dreams to be the vestiges of our daily thoughts, and observes that our reflections and discourse generate correspondent circumstances in sleep. It is certain that the mind after the storm and convulsion of disturbed passions, continues long like the troubled sea when it cannot rest, of which the waters cast up mire and dirt *. This is very sensibly experienced by persons whose affections are agitated by love, their sleep being generally harassed by the hopes and fears which distract them when awake, and tormented by those dreams, of which Dido complains, finding, like her, that the words and features of the beloved object

* Isaiah lvii. 20.

"Are deep imprinted in the anxious breast,
And care precludes the wearied limbs from rest *."

As, on the other hand, the visions of the sanguine or favoured lover present to him the object of his affections, though, perhaps, when he awake he must embrace a cloud.

Dugald Stewart justly observes, that as a proof that the succession of our thoughts in dreaming is influenced by our prevailing habits of association, it may be remarked that the scenes and occurrences which most frequently present themselves to the mind while asleep, are the scenes and occurrences of childhood and early youth. The facility of association is then much greater than in more advanced years, and although during the day the memory of the events thus associated may be banished by the objects and pursuits which press upon our senses, it retains a more permanent hold of the mind than any of our subsequent ac-

* Hærent infixi, &c.

quisitions; and like the knowledge which we possess of our mother tongue is, as it were, interwoven and incorporated with all its most essential habits. Accordingly in old men, whose thoughts are in a great measure disengaged from the world, the transactions of their middle age, which once seemed so important, are often obliterated, while the mind dwells as in a dream on the sports and companions of their infancy *.

On this subject Mr. Schwab, who is professor of philosophy in the university Caroline of Stutgard, remarks with ingenious illustration, that the vivacity of strong sensations continues an impression after the cause which gave birth to it is removed, as a circle of fire is presented by a burning coal that is turned round with rapidity †.

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* Elements of the Philosophy of Human Mind, C. 5.

† See Essai sur la Reduction des Facultes de l'Ame dans les nouveaux Memoires de l'Academie des Sciences, et des Belles Lettres a Berlin, A. D. 1785.

In consequence of this recurrence of images in sleep, similar to those which engage our waking attention, it happens that the slumbers of men conscious of integrity are composed and peaceful, while those of persons who are harassed by evil and turbulent passions are perturbed and miserable.

" Scarce can they close their eyes, they wildly start,
And in the fear of vengeance feel the smart;
Renew their rage, and their dark thoughts resume
Their stormy passions and their guilty gloom *."

Nothing can be more wretched than the sleep of those

" That feel
Those rods of scorpions, and those whips of steel
Which Conscience shakes, when she with rage controls,
And spreads amazing terror through their souls.
Not sharp revenge, nor hell itself can find,
A fiercer torment than a guilty mind,
Which day and night doth dreadfully accuse,
Condemns the wretch, and still the charge renews †."

* Claud. in Rufin. L. ii.

† Dryden's Translat. of Juven. Sat. L. xiv 248—255.

This consideration is the more important if we reflect farther, that circumstances which have strongly interested and affected the mind, are apt frequently to return in dreams; and the same impressions are renewed in many persons almost every night; hence Shakespear makes Aufidius say to Coriolanus when burning with indignant emulation in consequence of the defeats which he had experienced from the Romans,

> "I have nightly since
> Dream'd of encounters 'twixt thyself and me,
> We have been down together, in my sleep,
> Unbuckling helms, fisting each others throat,
> And wak'd half dead with nothing*."

He then who would not sleep in the affliction of terrible dreams which shake the mind, should be careful to retire with composed sentiments and unruffled passions, and should do well to follow the example of Sir Thomas Brown, who tells us that in his solitary and

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* Coriolanus, Act iv.

retired imagination, (Neque enim cum porticus, aut me lectulus accepit, desum mihi.) I remember I am not alone, and therefore forget not to contemplate Him and his attributes who is ever with me, especially those two mighty ones, his wisdom and eternity *.

It may be well also to remember, that as a night of terror succeeds a day of wickedness, so the reflections of eternal suffering will necessarily follow a life of misconduct.

It is related that Ptolemy enquired of one of the translators of the Septuagint, what would make one sleep in the night, and received for answer, that the best method was to have divine and celestial meditations, and to perform honest actions in the day †.

If we adopt the notion countenanced by Baxter, who supposes dreams to be the sug-

* Religio Medici, Book i. Sect. 11.

† Aristæus.

gestions of immaterial beings, we must admit with the ancients that these beings are divided into two classes, since if the office of some appear to be like that of the guardian sylph, whom Pope represents with friendly intentions of warning his charge against danger, to have prolonged the balmy rest of Belinda, and to have

"Summoned to her silent bed
The morning dream that hover'd round her head."

The malevolent employment of others must be like that of Satan, as

"By devilish arts to reach
The organs of the fancy, and with them forge
Illusions as they list, phantoms and dreams;
Or if inspiring venom they can taint
Th' animal spirits that from pure blood arise,
Like gentle breaths from rivers pure; thence raise
At least distemper'd discontented thoughts,
Vain hopes, vain aims, inordinate desires
Blown up with high conceits engendering pride *."

* Paradise Lost, B. iv.

In consistency with this opinion God may be supposed to render dreams subservient to good purposes, and by his good angels who as represented

> " With gentle dreams have calmed
> Portending good, and all his spirits composed
> To meek submission *."

And so far it may be said

> " God is also in sleep, and dreams advise,
> Which he hath sent propitious, some good
> Presaging †."

Whenever dreams have a bad tendency we may be persuaded that they are not the suggestion of good spirits, or that they are not to be literally followed. There is some instruction in the story of Sabaco, one of the pastoral kings of Egypt ‡, who, when the tutelary

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* Paradise Lost, B. xii. 593.

† Ibid. B. xii. L. 611—613.

‡ Diodorus, L. ii. as cited by Montesquieu.

deity of Thebes appeared to him in a dream, and ordered him to put to death all the priests of Egypt, very wisely judged that the gods were displeased at his being on the throne, since they advised him to commit an action so contrary to their ordinary will, and therefore retired into Æthiopia *.

* Herod. L. ii. C. 139.

CHAPTER XVIII.

ON THE INFLUENCE OF THE BODY ON THE MIND IN SLEEP.

" The heavy body loaded by excess
The sympathetic mind will oft depress,
Weigh down the spirit of celestial birth,
And chain its glorious faculties to earth."
Horace. Sat. i. L. ii. Corpus onust.

ALTHOUGH it has appeared in the preceding chapters that dreams are to be regarded as the creation of the mind, it has been admitted that the feelings of the body often interfere in suggesting sensations which affect the character of our thoughts, and are productive of reflections correspondent to the impressions excited.

Much of the composure and satisfaction of our dreams was attributed by the ancients to the

sobriety of our bodies when committed to sleep, and no dreams that could be subservient to divination were supposed to arise from the fumes of indigestion. Socrates is represented by Plato to have remarked, that when the intelligent spirit of the mind languishes in a profound sleep, and the fiercer and more sensual affections intoxicated, as it were, by immoderate food exult in ascendancy; the ideas that present themselves are devoid of reason, and full of incestuous and evil fancies; but when we take rest after wholesome and moderate food, that part of the mind in which there is reason and judgment being erect and capacious of good thoughts, and the body being neither distressed by want, nor loaded by satiety, the mind shines forth fresh and lively, and tranquil, and sure dreams arise *. On similar consideration dreams which obtain towards the morning, as not likely to be the suggestions of heavy sensations, were regarded as most clear and prophetic.

* Cicero de Divin.

In a composed state of the body there is certainly a more even tenor in our dreams, which resemble the calm reflections of our waking thoughts in tranquillity; the same scenes are renewed, and the same particulars recur. Unusual dreams argue often not only a disturbed state of mind, but a body gross and abounding with humour; and hence it is that physicians, as did particularly Hippocrates, with some degree of truth deduce conclusions concerning the temperament of our body from the nature and cast of our dreams. It is notorious that persons drunk, or in fevers, contemplate horrid spectres in their sleep; those who are oppressed with bilious melancholy behold triste and cadaverous figures; those whose constitution is choleric dream of fire and slaughter; those who are phlegmatic, of water, and those who are sanguine, of merriment. Levinus Lemnius was, however, perhaps, too fanciful when he affirmed, that to dream of wallowing in filth and mud argued fetid and putrid humours; but to dream of odoriferous and fragrant flowers

proved that pure and wholesome juices predominated *.

Such theories must not be too much depended upon, since it is certain that our imagination, even in its most sober and confined exertions, frames every variety of circumstance, and wanders through every change of scene.

> " Fantastic Morpheus!
> Ten thousand mimic fancies fleet around him,
> Subtle as air, and various in their natures;
> Each has ten thousand thousand different forms,
> In which they dance confused before the sleeper,
> While the vain god laughs to behold what pain
> Imaginary evils give mankind †."

We may believe the account of Apuleius, who tells us, that when he retired somewhat intoxicated, the night produced grievous and fierce images ‡; without, in general, considering

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* De Occult. Nat. Mirac. L. ii. C. 3.

† Rowe's Ulysses.

‡ Plut. Sympos. L. viii. Quest. 10.

the body as the principal agent in the production of dreams, as they certainly may originate independent of its influence in the sole recollection and energies of the mind, which in its ordinary speculation revives the days of childhood, recalls the friends and events of distant periods by sudden and unexpected starts unconnected with present sensations, places them in circumstances in which we never have beheld them, and in which they never have existed, blends and diversifies particulars fantastically with novel combinations, and metamorphoses persons into a thousand forms, who with Protean versatility appear to practise the frauds of every shape.

" Dreams are but interludes which fancy makes,
When monarch Reason sleeps then mimic wakes,
Compounds a medley of disjointed things,
A court of coblers, and a mob of kings.
Light fumes are merry, grosser fumes are sad,
Both are the reasonable soul run mad;
And many monstrous things in dreams we see
That never were, nor are, nor ere can be.
Sometimes we but rehearse a former play,
The night restores our actions done by day,
As hounds in sleep will open for their prey.

Sometimes forgotten things long cast behind
Rush forward to the brain and come to mind,
The nurses legends are for truths receiv'd,
And the man dreams but what the boy believed.
In short the farce of dreams is of a piece,
Chimeras all, and more absurd or less*."

If Mr. Hobbes speak of dreams universally, the author does not agree with him, that different dreams are to be attributed to different distempers, though he feel no inclination to refute the position, that lying cold may produce dreams of fear, as it would unquestionably produce the symptom of fear, shivering, and chattering teeth. We must allow for poetical representation when we read that

" All dreams
Are from repletion and complection bred
From rising fumes of undigested food,
And noxious humours that infest the blood.
When choler overflows, then dreams are bred
Of flames, and all the families of red;

* Dryden from Chaucer's Tale of the Cock and Fox.

Red dragons and red beasts in sleep we view,
For humours are distinguished by their hue.
From hence we dream of war and warlike things,
And wasps and hornets with their double stings.
Choler adust congeals our blood with fear,
Then black bulls toss us, and black devils tear.
In sanguine airy dreams aloft we bound,
With rheums oppress'd we sink, in rivers drown'd;
The dominating humour makes the dream *."

The whole is, that our sleeping as our waking thoughts may be changed from their own course by attention excited by the sensations of the body, and those who would enjoy quiet and pleasing dreams, should attend to the preservation of the sobriety and temperance of the body. The ancients were very particular in their diet when they were desirous of obtaining such, and particularly regarded beans, and the head of a polypus, as calculated to produce perturbed slumbers; and upon the same consideration the crude and undigestible peacock mentioned by Juvenal as the cause of

* Dryden from Chaucer's Cock and Fox.

sudden and intestate death must have been avoided *, as all who do not wish like the lazy glutton of Persius to

" Indulge their sloth, and batten with their sleep †,"

should avoid excess in turtle and venison, and may do well to observe the rule of Levinus Lemnius, who recommends to sleep with the mouth shut, which contributes to promote regular digestion, excluding the too rapid ingress of the external air, and cherishing the proper warmth of the stomach; a precaution, it is said, generally serviceable to weak stomachs, as we see that a cough or the hickup is often stopped by it when we are awake.

Dr. Hartley with more scope of allowance than Hobbes, considers dreams as reveries deducible from three causes—natural impres-

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* Sat. i. L. 143. Plutarch. περὶ δεισ. Vol. i. p. 56. Edit. Wyttenbach.

† Hic Satur. &c. Sat. v. L. 56. Dryden's Transl.

sions—redundancy of watery humours—and great heat. Whatever effect these may have in storing or colouring the mind in sleep, they cannot be considered as the primary cause of the operations which are displayed in dreams, and which are here considered as the effects of the exertion of the mental powers: even dreams which are occasioned by the ephialtes, or night mare, and which assume a gloomy or terrific character from the clouds raised up from flatulency, repletion, or stagnation of the blood, or crudity of the stomach, are in fact but reflections of the mind affected in sympathy to the sufferings of the body*.

The night mare is well described in the following lines of Dryden's translation of Virgil.

"And as when heavy sleep has closed the sight,
The sickly fancy labours in the night;

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* Young persons are particularly subject to this disorder, they should be awakened when they appear to be affected by it, and on changing their position it will cease.

We seem to run; and, destitute of force
Our sinking limbs forsake us in the course:
In vain we heave for breath; in vain we cry;
The nerves unbraced their usual strength deny;
And on the tongue the falt'ring accents die*."

Mara, from whence our night mare is derived, was much feared in the old Gothic or Scandinavian superstition. In the Runic Theology it was regarded as a spectre of the night which seized men in their sleep, and suddenly deprived them of speech and motion†; it was vulgarly called witch-riding, and in popular estimation considered as the immediate suggestion of fuliginous spirits incumbent on the breast.

As it appears then, that the mind may be thus indirectly harassed by phantoms resulting from repletion; we agree with Cicero, that our dreams will, in general, be most clear and regular when we retire to bed without being

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* Æneid, B. xii.

† See Warton's History of Poetry, Dissert. i.; and Bourne's Popular Antiquities.

loaded by meat and drink, and obtain the pure thoughts which are

"From light digestion bred."

Haller, and other writers, who conceive that dreams do not inseparably accompany sleep, suppose them to result from some strong stimulating cause, some forcible impression excited by the influence of undigested food, and not to obtain in sound sleep. It appears, however, that we dream as much towards the morning, though the impression of occurrences is then less immediate, and the effects of indigestion less perceptible, than towards the beginning of night.

Some physicians have asserted that we sleep best after eating plentifully, and alledge that as the ventricle is then full of blood, there is an open passage to the aorta, but daily experience may show the bad effects of going to sleep with a full stomach, however the fumes which ascend from it may operate as narcetic in

stupifying the brain. If we indulge even in a nap after dinner, we shall be convinced that though it may be useful to refresh exhausted nature in hot countries, and where the food is light, it is extremely heating and prejudicial, where, as in northern climates, animal food is eaten in great quantities.

Dr. Cheyne, who was a very distinguished physician, and effected a most remarkable change in his own constitution by attention to regimen, advises the valetudinary, the studious, and contemplative, either to abstain entirely from supper, or to restrict themselves to vegetable food, and to take a due time before they retire to bed after their meal *.

While we smile, therefore, at the pleasantry, we cannot approve the advice of Robert Burton, who, in his Anatomy of Melancholy, observes that some recommend to promote sleep by music, or falls of water, or frication;

* Essay on Health, p. 40.

and Andrew Borde by " a good draught of stronge drinke, but I, says he, by a nutmeg and ale, or a good draught of muscadine with toast and nutmeg, or a posset of the same *. The fumes of indigestion certainly contribute to produce by their effect on the mind perturbed and oppressive dreams, we shall, therefore, on all accounts do well to abide by the old rule

> " That your sleep may be light,
> Let your supper be slight."

A traditionary precept handed down to us from classical antiquity †.

In sleep, it has been said, either the mind thinks not at all of what it knows and retains in memory, or else it only attends to the corporeal species of past objects reposited in the common sensory, vivid representations of which excite altogether the same perceptions as are made by

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* P. 2. §. 2.

† Somnus ut sit levis, sit tibi cœna brevis.

the impressions from external objects upon the organs of sense by which they were first received. These representations, which are called dreams, happen whenever a small portion of the brain or common sensory is by the refluent motion of the spirits kept in a state of vigilance, whilst all the rest of the empire of sense and voluntary motion is silent and at rest. It is, however, by no means certain that the mind is ever so dormant as not to be harassed or amused by its own fancies, which in proportion as they are more or less strong may be remembered or forgotten. Those which excite vehement and interesting sensations, as particularly of fear and danger, as when

> " In dreams we fearful precipices tread,
> Or shipwreck'd labour to some distant shore*;"

as likewise those of excessive exultation and joy, are probably always remembered.

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* Dryden.

Some writers have pushed the notion of complexional dreams to a great extent, maintaining that the mind is so tinctured with the colouring of the predominating sentiments and passions, that the choleric uniformly dream of quarrelling, and the melancholy of gloomy objects, while the sanguine and cheerful exhibit the vivacity of their thoughts in the most agreeable dreams.

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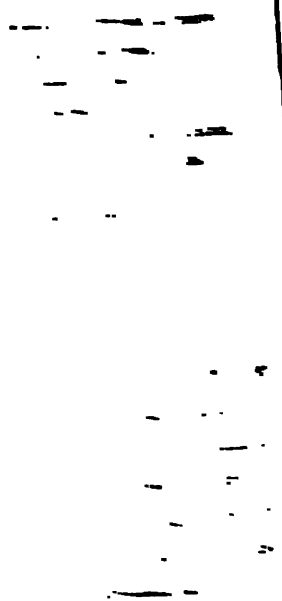

the " resemblances of one thing to another *:" they exhibit scenes, from the contemplation of which instruction may be derived; but they cannot be considered as more than casually predictive, or be understood to be subservient to divination. They may enable us to judge of the predominant features and undisguised propensities of the mind, but ought not to excite superstitious fears and conceits. The futility of dreams, with reference to futurity, is evident from the uncertainty of their import, and the variety of construction of which they have been judged capable. The great Bacon justly observes, that the interpretation of natural dreams does not stand upon a good foundation; and nothing can be more capricious and vain, than

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* Dream, Droom, Dutch. The word is derived by Casaubon, with more ingenuity than truth, from Δρᾶμα τυ βιυ, The drama of life. Junius has dwelt on the conceit, quoting the Greek epigram σκηνη ωας ο βιος, &c.

" Life is a scene, a sport, depose your care,
Or careless laugh, and learn your griefs to bear."

that the principles upon which the notable diviners of modern, as well as of ancient times, have practised their vagabond art; foretelling often, like the prophecy of Nostradamus, mentioned in Quevedo's Visions,

> "When the married shall marry,
> Then the jealous shall be sorry;
> And though fools will be talking,
> To keep their tongues walking,
> No man runs well, I find,
> But with his elbows behind."

Herodotus informs us, that the Egyptians were accustomed to note any prodigy, and to observe the events which ensued, and when any similar circumstance occurred, to expect a similar result *.

From the general character of the dreams indeed, which have been produced in the foregoing chapters, it is evident, as Solomon remarked, "that in the multitude of dreams there

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* Lib. ii. C. 82.

are divers vanities." If some occasional coincidences have appeared to prevail between some of those which have been reported and historical events, it is conceived, that they may in general be accounted for on the grounds which have been mentioned; or that they may be referred to the casual concurrences that might naturally happen between the fictions of the imagination and the incidents of many-coloured life. Men, as Lord Bacon has observed, mark when they hit, and not when they miss *. Whatever the ancients have related, says Fontenelle †, whether good or bad, was liable to be repeated; and what they themselves could not prove by sufficient reason, are at present received on their authority. Even among the ancients, however, we find the most philosophical and reflecting minds rejecting dreams

* Si sæpe jactaveris quandoque Venerem jacies—If the dice be often thrown, they must sometimes produce doublets.

† Histoire des Oracles.

as fallacious, and deriding the arts of interpretation as arbitrary impositions,

> " Laughing at those who to their ears instill'd
> Vain promises, while they their pockets fill'd *."

The want, indeed, of any accredited interpreters, or sure principles for the explication of dreams, are considerations which justly incline us to reject the idea of their being designed to furnish any knowledge of futurity. If we except the patriarchs and prophets, employed under God's acknowledged dispensation, who had understanding in visions and dreams, " imparted by God for great purposes," there is no sufficient proof that any person was ever endowed with the gift of intepreting dreams with any assurance. The Magi, indeed, were consulted by the Persians †; but their skill, we know, was little to

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* Nil credo Auguribus.

† Dan. ii. Ch. 2. Herod. Polyhym. 19. Cli. 107, 108. 110.

be depended upon, and the Greek and Roman soothsayers were deceitful to a proverb.

Alexander ab Alexandro mentions one Junianus Majus, who, by an unequivocal interpretation, explained dreams, and enabled, as he states, many persons to escape death or trouble*: and others have been represented to have had the same science; but we cannot pay much attention to such accounts, collected by compilers of marvellous tales, who produce no authority in support of their assertions.

Favorinus has justly observed of fortune-tellers in general, that it is absurd to attend to them, since, as he states the consideration, either they predict propitious or unfavourable circumstances: if they foretel the former, and are deceived, we incur the vexation of disappointment; if they predict calamities which do not happen, we suffer from unfounded appre-

* Lib. i. C. 11.

hension. If, on the other hand, when their predictions are well founded, they foreshew adversity, they only lead us to anticipate misery; and where they promise prosperous events, we gain but little in the view of objects of precarious attainment, and in gathering prematurely the fruits of future joy.

Cicero observes, that it is not even useful to know what is about to happen, for that it is only misery to be rendered solicitous, when we cannot do any thing that may avail us *. Let us be satisfied with enjoying and profiting by the present, which is the only means by which we can influence our future destinies.

The heathens were constantly the dupes of those who professed the vain arts of discovering the future; every one might have said,

"I fall a prey to ev'ry prophet's schemes,
And to old women who interpret dreams."

* De Natura Deorum L. iii. C. 6.

Cicero illustrates, pleasantly enough, the views of interpreters of dreams, relating, that a man dreamed there was an egg laid under his bed; the soothsayer told him, that where he imagined he saw an egg, there was a treasure; and in digging he discovered silver, and some gold in the midst of it. Upon which, in testimony of his gratitude, he brought some silver to the soothsayer, who asked him, why he did not give him some of the yolk also.

Nothing could be more precarious than the grounds upon which men formed their conjectures; or more superstitious than the opinions and practices which they built upon them.

Herodotus relates of the Nazamenes, that when they dreamed, they approached the monuments of their ancestors, and there slept, and were influenced by the images which occurred, and these were probably considered as the suggestions of those spirits which haunted the receptacles of the dead. Ghosts are

called by Homer, " people of dreams *;" and by Lycophron, " night-walking terrors."

The number of dreams increased probably with the anxiety which prevailed in the apprehension of great events, and the solicitude to avert their inauspicious intimations produced many vain rites.

Tibullus speaks of dreams

" With thrice-consecrated cates to be repell'd †."

The vanities and evil arts to which men had recourse in the delusion of these errors, were so soon displayed, that many of God's earliest precepts were directed against them, forbidding his people to use divination, or to become observers of times, or enchanters, or consultors with familiar spirits or wizards, or necromancers.

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* Δημος ονειρων. Odyss. ψ.

† Lib. i. Eleg. 5. See Ovid's Metamorph. L. xii. l. 10,

Philo informs us, that the law of Moses banished from the Jewish republic all persons of this description, because they were led by specious and plausible conjectures, and were unprovided by any sure and fixed maxims *.

Among the heathens were many whose good sense and philosophy revolted at the follies of this kind which prevailed. Jocasta says, in the Œdipus Tyrannus of Sophocles,

> " Let not a fear perplex thee, Œdipus:
> Mortals know nothing of futurity,
> And these prophetic fears are all impostors †."

Menander ridiculed the disposition to be affected by the impressions which prevailed; we are tortured, says he, if any one sneeze; we are enraged, if any one speak in an unpleasant tone; we are terrified at a dream, and scared out of our wits if an owl scream.

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* Lib. de Monarch.

† Act. iii.

Quintius exclaims in the words of Ennius,

> " I value not the Marsyan arts, nor start
> At ought that vain diviners can impart;
> I laugh at him who augury esteems,
> Or listens to expositors of dreams:
> They nor in art nor science are inspir'd,
> But slaves in superstitious service hired.
> Idle, or mad, or poor, they fain would shew
> The path to others which themselves don't know.
> They promise riches, but a fee request,
> Secure their portion, and give you the rest."

Many, however, who might be supposed to have been superior to all such credulity, appear to have been unable to shake off the superstitious fetters of the times in which they lived. Among the Romans, Tacitus, who is justly regarded as a philosophical historian, but who sometimes betrays a confined habit of thinking, as well as great want of information, seems, with other writers, to have attributed more to the Chaldæan arts than they probably merited. He appears particularly, as well as Suetonius *, to have credited the

* In August. 98. Dio. 55. p. 555. 58.

pretensions of Thrasullus, who was the preceptor of Tiberius, when at Rhodes, in this mysterious science. He relates, in the sixth book of his Annals, that Tiberius, as often as he had occasion to consult in such concerns, was accustomed to ascend a lofty part of his house with the privity of one freedman, who was ignorant of letters, and of robust body, and who generally preceded the person whose art Tiberius wished to prove, conducting him through broken and precipitous paths (for the house hung over a rock), and who, if there was any suspicion of ignorance or fraud, was employed to precipitate the diviner into the sea, that no informer against his secret practices might exist. When Thrasullus was conducted over these rocks, after he had moved Tiberius by his answers, predicting his accession to the empire, and other future events, with much skill, he was inquired of whether he had also cast his own nativity, and what year and day he was to have. He having measured the position and space of the stars, began first to hesitate, and then to tremble; and the more

he examined, he appeared the more and more filled with wonder and fear; and at length he exclaimed, that an ambiguous and almost the extremest danger threatened him. Upon which Tiberius embraced him, acknowledging his skill, and assuring him of his safety; and receiving what he had said as oracular, he afterwards held him among his intimate friends.

Upon which relation the historian professes, that after hearing these and such like accounts, he is at a loss to determine whether mortal affairs roll on by fate and immutable necessity, or by chance; and after discoursing concerning various opinions not easily explained, he represents it as a general persuasion not inconsistent with the convictions of most men, that the future events of every man's life are predestined from the beginning; but that some things happen differently from what is predicted, through the error of those who proclaim what they are ignorant of; that so the fame of the art is destroyed, of which his own and former ages furnished illustrious proofs;

since, as he adds, the empire was promised to Nero by the son of the same Thrasullus.

All that can be said upon this subject is, that as the heathens were not enlightened by revealed religion, we cannot wonder that they wandered into all the labyrinths of error; and it perhaps may be admitted, that their delusions were increased by the arts and suggestions of evil spirits, who, before the coming of Christ, seem to have ruled with considerable ascendancy in every department of superstition, and possibly even promoted a delusive confidence in the arts of divination, by communicating some intimations of such events as their knowledge or sagacity might discover or conjecture.

The arts of divination, therefore, and their professors in every department, appear to deserve nothing but contempt; and attention to them is more especially reprehensible, since the diffusion of knowledge which has been produced by the communication of the Gospel,

Their professors indeed, have been justly ridiculed,

> " They may attempt to tell us
> What Adam dreamt of, when his bride
> Came from the closet in his side;"

but it is extreme folly to suffer them to harass our minds, or to mislead us to a delusive confidence in their pretences. The intelligence which they furnish amounts to little more than what Quevedo, in his harmless Discovery collected, who tells us,

> " From second causes this I gather,
> Nought shall befall us good or bad,
> Either upon the land or water,
> But what the great Disposer wills."

If dreams have any foundation, and foreshew events which must happen, there must in general be but little use in contemplating their prophetic scenes. If they predict circumstances which are contingent and conditional, their accomplishment can be influenced only by an adherence to the general rules of the Gospel, and we should therefore endeavour

that our faith stand not in the wisdom of man, but in that of God; and reject all those indications as dangerous, by which artful men have imposed on credulity, as

"Richard laid plots by drunken prophecies, libels, and dreams,
To set his brother Clarence and the king
In deadly hate one against the other."

The regard paid to dreams has generated, in modern as well as ancient times, many silly practices and extravagant contrivances, now insensibly falling into neglect and oblivion.

Among the fanciful arts which were practised in the seclusion of the convent, the Franciscan mode was remarkable; like many other customs, it originated in pagan folly. These good fathers, in imitation of ancient priests, (who, after performing their religious rites and sacrifices, laid down on the skins of the victims in order to obtain dreams,) were accustomed to commit themselves to sleep on mats upon which some ecstatical brother had slept, ex-

pecting, after the performance of their sacrifices of the mass, to be favoured with the suggestions of inspiration.

Some writer of natural magic has prescribed perfumes for the procuring of pleasant dreams, and some have represented prophetic dreams to be attainable by the operation of such physical impressions as vegetable substances may produce. Flax, flea-wort, and other productions, are mentioned as efficacious in this respect*; and probably they produce as good effects as the fasting on St. Agnes' Day, a custom which originated in a pretended miracle that occurred to the parents of the saint when lamenting at her tomb; or as that of depositing the first cut of the cheese at a lying-in, called "the groaning cheese," under the pillow, which was supposed to cause lovers to dream of the objects of their af-

* Bacon, vol. iii. p. 195.

fection, a practice now remembered only in the politer superstition of the bride cake.

There is a connexion in all these follies, and those who yield to the impressions excited by dreams, may soon be led to hang up, agreeably to ancient custom in the North, holy shoes in stables to counteract the malevolence of the night-mare; or in the same bias of reflection to watch with solicitude the favillous particles of a snuff of candle, the filmy appendage of the grate, or the bouncing coffin from the fire: to regard with anxiety the spilling of salt, or the position of the knives and forks: despising such trifles, the enlightened mind will learn,

" Not with perplexing thoughts
To interrupt the sweet of life, from which
God hath bid dwell far off all anxious cares,
And not molest us, unless we ourselves
Seek them with wand'ring thoughts and notions vain.
But apt the mind in fancy is to rove
Uncheck'd, and of her roving is no end,
Till warn'd, or by experience, she learn
That not to know at large of things remote

From use, obscure and subtle, but to know
That which before us lies in daily life,
Is the prime wisdom, what is more is fume
Or emptiness, or fond impertinence,
And readers us in things that most concern,
Unpractis'd, unprepar'd, and still to seek *."

Dreams are considered in Scripture as the vainest of shadows, and human life, in its fleeting and empty pursuits, is exhibited in its vainest shew when compared to a dream.

" We are such stuff as dreams are made of;
A little life is ended with a sleep †."

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* Paradise Lost.

† Tempest.

CHAPTER XX.

OF THE USE OF FICTITIOUS DREAMS IN LITERATURE.

THAT dreams, which were considered in their nature as so important, should be imitated in fictitious representations by ancient and modern writers, was consistent with the general objects of literature, which might be expected to avail itself of the strongest and most popular impressions. Divine dreams, which actually were imparted to God's servants, formed a basis of conviction on this subject, handed down by tradition, and enlarged by superstitious additions: the idea of an intercourse with beings of the spiritual world, and with objects of fear or affection, though departed from life, was natural to the human mind, and became

the foundation of much religious apprehension among the heathens. Those therefore who sought, either to amuse the fancy, or to instruct the judgment, naturally employed the agreeable fictions, which they knew were best calculated to engage the imagination. Hence divine dreams became the constant appendages of the heathen mythology, and accounts, real or fictitious, of communications in vision, were interwoven in every production.

Information which was superior to the vulgar philosophy of the time, modestly intimated its discoveries as suggestions imparted by revelation to the mind, and conjectures concerning the interests and future dispensations of the invisible world were delivered with striking impression as divine communications. If a warning was to be conveyed, what so affecting as the exhortation of a departed friend! If advice was to be given, what so persuasive as the voice of a revered character, which had long carried great weight!

Such machinery was particularly calculated for works of imagination, and the poems of antiquity, as well as those of modern times, were frequently decorated with its ornaments.

It is perhaps doubtful, whether the sublime vision described in the fourth chapter of the Book of Job, and which has been cited in a former part of this work, is to be regarded as a real scene imparted to the mind of this righteous man, or as merely a vehicle for the religious instruction which is communicated in its awful description.

A very early example of a dream designed to enliven poetry, is furnished in the Iliad of Homer, which was possibly introduced, not merely as ornamental, but with some view of exposing the danger of listening to ambiguous suggestions in sleep. It represents Agamemnon as deluded by a promise of victory, if he should lead out all the Grecians to battle, and

as suffering a defeat in consequence of Achilles joining in the engagement.

The circumstances, as described by the poet, remind us of the particulars recorded in the twenty-second chapter of the First Book of Kings, in which Ahab appears to have been seduced by a lying spirit to destruction.

Historians and orators, likewise, were by no means insensible of the value conferred on their works by embellishments so interesting: they therefore invented similar relations, and it is probable, that many of the decems which have been examined in this work, were no more genuine than the speeches ascribed to distinguished characters, being originally only agreeable inventions contrived for rhetorical effect.

Instances of these may be found in the celebrated dream of the choice of Hercules, furnished in the Memorabilia of Xenophon, or

in that of Lucian, which was probably designed as a humourous imitation of it.

If, however, some dreams are so interwoven with historical accounts, that it is doubtful whether they are related as real or not, there are many which are evidently employed as ornamental modes of instruction. Such is the dream, for instance, which is described to have expressed the anger of the gods against Numenius, who had pried into the Eleusinian mysteries, and published the secrets of philosophy. This was said to have represented the Eleusinian goddesses meretriciously attired, and sporting before a public brothel; who, upon inquiry into the cause of such indecent conduct, informed Numenius, that they resented his having driven them from retirement, and exposed them to the common gaze of men *. It is evident, that this was only a reproof of the folly of exposing the mysteries

* Macrob. in Somnum Scipion. L. ii. C. 2.

of a licentious superstition to public animadversion; a measure very impolitic and injurious to the interests of those who lived by its support; and similar to the presumption, censured by Callimachus, of those who, with Actæan audacity, ventured to contemplate the undisguised charms of Minerva *.

One of the most beautiful fictions employed by ancient writers in prose is that of Cicero, written probably in imitation of one of Plato. In this, which is entitled the Dream of Scipio, the Roman orator † has conveyed the most sublime instruction concerning many points in natural philosophy and the immortality of the soul. And the tendency of the work was to encourage a patriotic affection for the country of a man's birth, and a contempt of human glory, upon principles which sometimes almost

* Ειδειν αθη αιης ςηθεα και λαγονας.

† De Repub. Lib. vi.

approach to those which Christianity has consecrated.

Some writers, it is true, have conceived such fictions as discreditable to the gravity and truth of philosophical instruction; but the dream in question is vindicated in an elaborate commentary by Macrobius, who considers it as an engaging veil under which truth may be usefully presented to the mind.

We have already observed at sufficient length on those divine dreams, which were imparted in evidence of the authority and instruction of the evangelical dispensation, and have considered them as furnished exclusively in support of Revelation, and as having ceased with the other miraculous testimonies of Christianity.

The persuasion, however, of preternatural intelligence being communicated in dreams, has continued so forcibly to operate at all

times, that Christian writers, who have reported and invented dreams of pretended inspiration, have obtained more credit and success than they have merited; and however little claim to regard they may be thought to have when philosophically examined, they have at least been allowed so much authority in popular estimation, that they have at all times been employed, not only with a view to impose on credulity, but as ingenious fictions agreeable to common apprehension, framed for the expression of instruction in an allegorical manner.

Among those which are of earlier production, we may notice the Shepherd of Hermas, a moral vision of the second century, in which are represented the characters and circumstances of the Church at that time; and many other instances might be produced, if it were necessary, from works of later times, none of which, perhaps, are more ingenious and agreeable, than those which have been published in

this country; as particularly the allegorical visions and dreams which have appeared in the Spectator, and other periodical papers.

The consideration of these belongs more properly to the subjects of general literature.

THE END.

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